

Anthony of Asgard

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Anthony of Asgard

by [RenneMichaels](#)

Summary

After several years of being housed in Stark Tower as a state prisoner of Asgard, Loki is recalled to Realm Eternal. Devastated Tony is now minus a lab partner, wingman and a snark buddy for movie night. Pepper has moved to the west coast and married, SHIELD is doing some crazy shit and with the exception of occasionally seeing Bruce, Tony doesn't have much interaction with his former team mates. He wonders how it is possible to feel so lonely in a city so full of people. However he's an engineer and a genius... he can fix this. All he has to do is convince Queen Frigga and Odin All Father to go along with his plan. - Sequel to Queens Grace but you do not have to have read it to follow this story. I wish you would, but it isn't necessary. **COMPLETE**

Notes

Queens Grace Continuum One Shot. Queens Grace being the fic that refused to die. But you don't have to have read Queens Grace to understand this since it is a story unto itself.

Starting premise - Loki has was recalled to Asgard after several years of being a prisoner in Stark Tower as a favor to Queen Frigga when Asgard proved to be too dangerous to his now mortal and memory altered self. After his recall, Loki and Tony started a long distance friends with benefits relationship that takes place on Loki's yearly reward visit to Midgard.

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See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Nobody said life would ever be easy

Chapter Summary

Chapter Summary - After housing the God of Mischief in his tower for several years Loki is recalled to Asgard. This leaves Tony minus a lab partner, wingman and buddy to snark with on Movie Night. Pepper has moved to the west coast and married, SHIELD is doing some crazy shit. With the exception of occasionally seeing Bruce, Tony doesn't have much interaction with his former team mates. He wonders how it is possible to feel so lonely in a city so full of people. He's an engineer, he decides to fix this. - Sequel to Queens Grace. You do not have to have read Queens Grace to follow this.

A thousand hits in two days. *sniff* I am so proud. :D Thanks to all who have read, commented, fav'd and followed!

Comments: 40 Kudos: 74 Bookmarks: 7 Hits: 1000!

Two thousand hits in three weeks! *Whoooo Hooo* Much love to all who commented, bookmarked and fav'd Comments: 73 Kudos: 109 Bookmarks: 19 Hits: 2003!

Chapter Notes

A continuation of Queens Grace the fic that refused to die. But you don't have to have read that one to understand this. I do have 70k more of Anthony of Asgard material planned eventually.

Starting Premise - Loki has been recalled to Asgard after several years of being a prisoner in Stark Tower as a favor to Queen Frigga when Asgard proved to be too dangerous to his now mortal and memory altered self. After his recall, Loki and Tony started a long distance friends with benefits relationship that takes place on Loki's yearly reward visit to Midgard.

TRIGGER WARNINGS IN END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Nobody said life would ever be easy.

Chapter # 1a - Tony buys a car

It had been a terrible week, but then it always was before his yearly trip. Every year Odin would yell and tell him that no matter what had been agreed, this year he was not travelling to Midgard.

And every year, Frigga and Thor had to jump in and separate them as he and Odin sniped, yelled and occasionally screamed at each other.

Oh, first Loki would be offered a sop of some sort or the other. This year it was an offer of a trip lasting a whole week if he went to Álfheimr instead of Midgard. Last year, it was Odin had offered the a few minor powers back if he stayed in Asgard. In previous years, there had been other forms of enticement, some good, some bad, although the year that he had been offered a rich wife in the form of a minor Vanir princess named Sigyn was probably the worst. Not that the girl wasn't lovely, she was, and in exactly the lithe way that Loki liked. But she also came from a family famous for their fertility. Loki would be damned if he would allow himself to be tied to Asgard by a wife and children. Someday he was going to leave, no matter what Odin said, and Loki wanted no anchors holding him back.

OoooO

Loki had lived for a thousand years, and a drought of the intimate sort lasting even thirty or forty years was doable for him, not comfortable, but doable if it was necessary. Besides, Loki always managed to enjoy himself that way on his yearly visit to Midgard.

He even found enjoyment when he had gone in disguise so that Odin couldn't recognize him or so that Tony couldn't unwittingly give him away like he had the first time. Perhaps understandably Tony did not truly understand how easily the All Father could see and hear anything he wanted to from his throne. Additionally, Frigga and Loki had no clue that Odin was keeping such a close eye on her little servitor, what with Loki being back in Asgard. Frigga had thought that distracting Odin during Loki's actual visit was all that would be necessary. A month or so later Odin had been watching when Tony spoke of the visit to one of the Avengers.

The discussion that had ensued between his parents had been loud enough that it caused no end of speculation between the servants.

Despite or perhaps in spite of the argument with Odin, Frigga had decided to continue offering him a yearly trip in return for Loki at least not openly antagonizing Odin and Thor. To avoid causing problems for his mother, the first few times he had gone secretly, allowing his mother to place a female glamour on him to hide from Odin. He scheduled his visits for the evening of the Stark International Christmas party and for reasons Loki could not even initially explain to himself... Instead of quietly informing Tony who he was and the impressing upon the little mortal the need for absolute secrecy, Loki decided to have a bit of fun. As so he did. Have fun that is. In the following years Loki had always managed to grab Tony's attention, even if it had required him to be sometimes more than a bit manipulative to capture the playboy's attention.

The whole charade had not been without its darkly amusing side; Tony finally got what he wanted from Loki, but just didn't know it. Perhaps not so amusing was Loki's inability to decide if this was all to lay groundwork in case of future need... Or rather assuage a need that he had but didn't want to acknowledge. Oh, Loki could tell himself anything, and the Nine knew he could spin out perfectly reasonable justifications for anything until the cycle renewed. However he normally tried to be honest with himself, if only for the rarity of the experience. The problem in this case was that Loki just honestly couldn't decide which it was in his own mind.

The whole mess with the little Midgardian had his thoughts so tangled that even a solid hour of concentration wasn't enough to yield a single coherent thought on his feelings for Tony.

On one hand Loki hated the mouthy, but cute little mortal who had ignored him when he needed help. On the other, Tony could be an engaging companion who not only appreciated, but even joined in and encouraged Loki's favorite past time of messing with people's heads. The man was

intelligent, a point in his favor. However Tony was also extremely selfish, and frankly Loki had put up with enough of that from Thor. Tony was interested in Loki to the point of putting years of effort into trying to get him in bed. Make no mistake; such persistence was flattering from a certain angle, yet it was also scary from another. Tony wanted Loki's knowledge to be sure, but had more than repaid the information he received with insights and information exchanges that benefited Loki. More important than all of the rest was that Tony Stark had the means and the power to provide a safe haven for Loki in case of great need. And that was definitely a card worth keeping in his hand.

Unable to decide in his own mind why, in the end Loki had taken a page from his brother's book and fallen into the habit of just not thinking about it. He ruthlessly dragged his thoughts away whenever they drifted towards the whys of his allowing Tony to annually seduce him without knowing it was him and just enjoyed it for the physical release that it was.

This had worked fine until the year Tony had caught onto him. Several days after his visit, during their monthly letter exchange Tony had included photos and security footage of the lovely woman he had met during the just passed Yule celebration. Tony had gone on and on, praising 'her' intelligence, looks and charm while bragging how 'she' was totally into him; as well 'she' should be because he was after all Tony Stark.

Mortified did not even begin to describe how Loki felt when he had to listen to a long tongue in cheek ramble about how great this 'woman' was and how Tony had felt like he had 'known her' for years despite just conversing with 'her' for a few hours. Loki had declined to even comment on the subject, even after Tony had brought it up again the next month, sending him a few more pictures and asking Loki what 'he' thought of 'her'.

The month after that, the mortal had sent his mother an exquisite dragonfly motif hair comb and a letter asking her if there was anything she could do to get 'Loki himself' approval for another visit to Earth. His Mother had of course badgered Loki about the strange wording of the request until he had been forced to admit that the mortal had somehow found out about Loki's deception. Frigga's finger had paused in its light tracing of the dragonfly design as she raised amused blue eyes to regard him. A few months later when the All Father had complimented her on the antique gold and tortoise shell comb, she had casually passed on Tony's request and her adamant recommendation that it be granted without ever letting on that Loki had been visiting all along in disguise.

OoooO

Wrenching his attention from the past and back to the work at hand, Loki checked that the structure being built for the next set of bridge supports was actually following the plans he had drawn up. Assured that it had been Loki once again mounted his horse, and followed by his personal guards, returned to his construction office.

He managed to keep his expression set so as not to show anything that would hint to Asgard what he was thinking about. Internally though Loki smirked, thinking of all the times he and Tony had teased each other into a frenzy. And the best time of all was the year Tony had come out and in Tony's words, 'busted him' and told him to make sure he was in his normal male Æsir form when he came back the next year or he wasn't going to allow him in bed. The memories of Tony finally moaning his name were enough to kick off his private fantasies for the rest of the year. Well, his memories and the surveillance videos that Jarvis had kindly downloaded for him of that night and several of the previous ones that he had shared with Tony.

While Loki's expression was almost always bland and courteous, his guards had spent a lot of time with him. He was aware that there was some speculation on what exactly the normally tightly

focused Loki might be thinking of when that strange distant look came over him.

OoooO

The minute Heimdall left, Loki knew something was wrong. Normally Tony was waiting at the terrace entrance for him. Occasionally Pepper, if she was in her New York office would also meet him. Loki didn't always see Pepper in person, but she did try to make it as often as often as she could manage. If she couldn't schedule a New York Visit, he at least talked to her by phone or video conference.

Loki knew he'd be lying if he said he wasn't a bit disappointed that no one was on hand to greet him, but he did know that even with the best of intentions, Stark sometimes got caught up in the lab and Jarvis had a hard time getting his attention.

Loki shouldering his now ratty Iron Man backpack and carrying a large, heavy duty, reinforced leather duffle bag he let himself into Stark's large living room. "Hello Jarvis, where's Tony. Is he down in the lab?"

"Good evening Loki." The AI greeted him warmly. "Mister Stark got a call about a car he has been trying to buy and went to look at it this afternoon and he hasn't made it back yet. I will call him and let him know you are here."

Loki laughed, "Thanks Jarvis, I'm going to run a few things down to the lab. Tell Tony that I am starting without him."

"I will do so sir."

Dropping his backpack on top of the bar, he carried the duffle bag down to the lab. Clearing space on one of the work benches, he unpacked about ninety pounds of mineral powders from the oversized leather questing duffle. He hoped that by providing the materials that were necessary to grow bridge crystals in their raw form, it would make it easier for Tony's research team to identify and source them on Midgard. He also unpacked over a hundred pounds each of Adamantine and Cavorite ingots.

"Sir, I'm having trouble reaching Mister Stark, but I will keep trying. Would you like to come back up to the penthouse when you are done and look over the books and files that we have ready for you to take back?"

"Thank you Jarvis, I'll do that, it will save time later. And I have some stuff to drop off up there also." Loki said smiling up at the AI. Which, he understood was not necessary, and Tony always laughed when he did it... but it seemed strange to look off in a corner where a camera was, when Jarvis's voice issued from the ceiling.

While he couldn't help but feel a little disappointed that Tony wasn't here to meet him, he knew the man had the attention span of a child, and most likely would not have been able to resist looking at the car the minute he was called about it. It was just typical Tony behavior. When dealing with the genius you had to understand that sometimes his priorities were a bit skewed. After emptying the duffle and checking out the new stuff sitting around the lab, Loki went upstairs. Grabbing his back pack he unpacked a few bottles of an excellent elfin Celarta liqueur and several more bottles of various Æsir mead and whiskey equivalents, hiding them behind the bar for Tony to find later. He'd also hid presents from himself, Frigga and Thor for Tony and Pepper under the large Yule tree in the corner.

Loki spent the time waiting for Tony talking to Jarvis and reloading his back pack with various items set out for him. A new custom, big screen Stark laptop, a few external hard drives, one empty, one full of program files and research papers, sd cards, electronic books, new music and anything else that Tony thought he might be interested in. There were also supplies for his printer, packs of his favorite types of candy and the ubiquitous Iron Man gear that Tony delighted in giving him, t-shirts and some strange stuffed children's toys this year.

Loki stowed the shirts, blushing when he thought about an incident that had happened during the times when he had been forced to sneak around in order to visit Midgard once a year. He was when he was still disguised of course, lest Odin sitting on Hlidskjalf decide to cast his eyes upon Midgard. That year he had again shape shifted into a petite brunette female who, like various shape shifted versions of the previous years had no trouble intriguing the billionaire and being invited upstairs. That year Tony had talked him into wearing an Ironette outfit, only with red spike heels instead of boots. He had found the a few weeks later that by that time, unknown to him, Tony had been wise to his tricks and had known the woman was actually Loki, but just wasn't letting on.

Later, when he was openly visiting Midgard, Tony hauled a version of that outfit out of his closet sized for Loki's male form, and wanted Loki to wear it after dinner that evening. Thinking the billionaire wouldn't agree, Loki had said that he would, but only if Tony wore a collar and leash and nothing else. He was stunned at the speed at which Tony had not only smirkingly agreed, but was actually leashed, collared and naked. Loki wasn't even done trying on the heels for size before Tony was finished getting dressed. Or rather undressed. That Tony actually had a collar and leash in his closet, a very tasteful red leather number, had amazed him so much he couldn't find it in himself to be the least bit shy about his own outfit that evening. It had been a fun night over all, even if it still made him blush just thinking about it.

Casting his mind about for something to distract it, Loki realized just how hungry he was. In the days leading up his annual visit he was usually too upset to eat much, partially due to excitement and partially due to the stress of arguing with Odin.

"Jarvis, I am quite hungry. Could you order some pizza and Chinese for us please? Hopefully Tony will be back before the food arrives."

"Of course sir and might I suggest a German Riesling I have chilling on the top shelf of the wine cooler? I understand that some of the more adventurous food critics are now pairing it with both Pizza and many of the Chinese dishes that you and Mister Stark prefer.

Tony still wasn't back when the food arrived, but Jarvis had the same items delivered to Pepper in her California office, so they had dinner together using Jarvis' security cameras as a sort of video conference system. Jarvis was right, the Riesling paired marvelously with the foods that Jarvis had selected.

Pepper had accepted, with an understanding sigh that Tony had been delayed, but was gleeful that she had more time to talk without Tony trying to monopolize the conversation. After some general catching up, including pictures of Pepper and her husband Dale's last vacation in Bali. For her part, Pepper decided to take advantage of Tony's absence and ask about Odin's more recent attempts to tie Loki to Asgard.

"So, Loki," Pepper said, casually while pouring herself another glass of wine. "Odin still trying to marry you off? Or has he finally dropped that idea?"

"Not dropped, so much as delayed. I think my mother has had words with him on the subject," Loki said with a sigh. "This year I was offered a weeklong trip to visit my Uncle Frey's court. However Sigyny continues to guest with a cousin of hers, so I occasionally see both ladies when they wander

out to the BiFrost site to visit and when I am required to attend major feasts, they always seem to be seated at or near the high table.”

Pepper smiled, “Well look on the bright side. Having a cousin to pal around with might distract her; perhaps her cousin will introduce her to someone else.” She noticed Loki’s twisted smile.

“No?” she asked in an aggrieved voice. “What’s so amusing about that?”

Refusing to look at her, Loki answered. “I think they now have a competition going, to see who will captivate me first.” Biting his lower lip he finally glanced at her, “It might be flattering if they weren’t doing it to gain Odin’s favor for their family.”

“Oh.”

“Okay, I can see where that sucks.”

“Indeed,” Loki frowned down at his plate, “I don’t ever recall being the object of so much pursuit in all my years in Asgard. I’m almost starting to believe that someone has put out a memo to everyone with an eligible daughter.”

“Well just be glad they don’t have email there,” she teased.

“Believe me Pepper,” Loki retorted with a bitter smile, “Æsir gossip travels faster and farther than even Twitter would be able to achieve.” Then not wanting to ruin their evening, he switched to lighter subjects, telling her about how well the plants he had taken his mother last year were blooming and Thor’s latest blunders in diplomacy.

“You know, you could occasionally clue him in.”

“No,” Loki told her firmly. “He has to learn how to do this himself. I will not be there for him later. Besides, it’s not like I see him that often, I mostly hear about his problems from others.” The god essayed a small hopeful smile. “If I can’t get out from under Odin’s thumb, I know Thor will release my restrictions when he becomes king. And the minute he does I am leaving.”

“So, I guess you are still managing not to fight with him anymore?”

“Of course not,” the god said bitterly. “While I am not the least bit helpful, I am always most sympathetic when we meet. I am the perfect loving brother.”

“It must make you crazy.”

“You have no idea.”

OoooO

Several hours and numerous excuses from Jarvis later, Loki was not so understanding. Why Tony was not answering incoming calls from his phone was originally worrying. But Jarvis was able to ascertain that Tony had not been in an accident or anything by tracking a bank transfer for the purchase of the car and then several charges after that in a restaurant and then bar. Large charges, like those for a party.

While he couldn’t help but worry that perhaps he had offended Tony in some way, Loki soon dismissed that idea. He only saw Tony once a year. Also nothing in Tony’s last video message had contained anything indicating that the man was upset. Loki borrowed a heavy coat of Tony’s and paced out on the terrace for a while, before he finally drew up a deck chair and sat looking out over

the city. Hands deep in the coat's pockets, he huddled in the chair, his booted feet up on the lower safety rail. As he sat there, it began to snow and Loki felt his thoughts turn as frozen as the night air.

He wasn't sure how long he had sat there until at last, Jarvis managed to get his attention and told him that Tony and a guest were on their way up in the elevator. Loki had just made it to the terrace doors when he saw Tony enter with a red head wrapped around him. Even if his expression had remained as frozen as the outside air, Loki felt like he had received a sharp blow to the chest. He watched unbelievably as Tony pushed the woman up against the wall kissing her and sliding his hands under her dress for several minutes until he finally pushed her towards his bedroom.

OoooO

he didn't know how long it was before it registered that the occasional low moan he was hearing was actually coming from him. Loki finally lifted his head from where it had been resting on the cold glass, stumbling backwards ungracefully until he was as far from the door as he could get. Sinking down on his heels the god wrapped his arms around his knees and rested his head upon them while leaning his back against the terrace's parapet wall.

He was more than painfully aware that he had absolutely no claim on Stark, and had never really had one.

It's not like he didn't know the inventor was seeing other people, he told himself, eyes stinging as he stubbornly held them open. After all he wasn't even sure in his own mind why he had originally decided to sleep with Stark. A way to fix the mortal sympathies on him in case of future need? Curiosity to see if Stark would even recognize him? Whatever the reason, once Loki had started he just couldn't resist continuing.

Besides, Stark wasn't the one who was a caged criminal, the little mortal was free to be with whoever he wanted to be with.

It was just so very disappointing that Stark hadn't even given Loki a hint that he was no longer wanted to spend time with him. If he had just left a note or something, Loki would have cleared out as soon as he had dropped off the supplies Stark had requested and picked up the updated program files. Or better, Loki would have sent Thor to do the delivery, pickup and rune maintenance.

It's not fair; Loki thought miserably beginning to rock a bit on his heels. Then after several long minutes of 'wallowing' in self-pity Loki berated himself for such sentimental nonsense.

After all, when had life in general and his in particular ever been fair?

Loki's first thought had been to just call Heimdall, forget the back pack in the house, forget renewing the Starks rune, just call Heimdall and head back to Asgard. But fair or not, he did have obligations and running home like a jilted adolescent was not happening. Just because his occasional thoughts of someday returning to Stark Tower were shattered, that still didn't mean he wanted to be trapped in Asgard for the next few centuries. And even if the man no longer wanted him as a bed partner, Stark's help with speeding up the BiFrost repair had been invaluable in the past and Loki would hate to lose any future insights the engineer might have. Besides not acting like a scorned suitor might still allow Stark's tower to be at least a temporary sanctuary in case of dire need.

His head hurt.

"Jarvis, would I be able to re-enter the suite without Stark being notified?" he called softly sure

that the AI would hear him.

“Sir muted me immediately upon entering the building,” Jarvis said somewhat peevisly. “So I will be unable to notify him if you enter the suite.” The AI continued in a sly tone.

“Marvelous,” he said tiredly, wiping a hand over his stinging eyes. “Could you check and see if I have any money left on my debit card?”

Loki stood, running his hand through his hair, slicking it back with the dampness from melted snow before dusting snow off the back of his pants where he had been leaning against the wall.

“Sir, you still have several thousand dollars left in that account, plus the considerable amount of money Sir has put into your savings to pay for the materials you have been bringing him.”

“I don’t want Stark’s charity,” Loki spat without thinking.

He stood there for several long moments. “Jarvis, please make sure you deduct the cost of the computers and other tech I’ve been taking home with me from my savings, let me know if it isn’t enough.”

“I will do so sir, I believe you can enter the suite without fear of disturbing sir as long as you stay clear of the master suite hall way.”

Slipping into the suite, he grabbed his back pack and unpacked the Iron Man gear, sticking it on a shelf below the bar. Then stashing the pack and his empty duffle bag near the terrace doors, Loki took the elevator down to the small apartment on his old floor to grab his wallet from the top night stand drawer. He found it right where he had left it there when he had first returned to Asgard. Checking quickly he saw that while he had a decent amount of cash, his credit card and legal ID had expired. Fortunately his debit card didn’t have an expiration date on it, so according to Jarvis it was still usable.

Jarvis’ voice broke the silence, “Sir, even after deducting your computers and such, you still have several thousand dollars available to you without anything being transferred from your company stock account.”

“Marvelous. Wonderful. Fine,” Loki said bitterly, sliding his wallet into the coat pocket and snagging his old watch before heading for the door.

“Don’t forget you will need your pin number, it’s six-two-seven-five and if you would stop at the night service desk, they will give you a charged phone so sir or I can reach you if we need to.”

Punching the down button savagely, the doors slid open. “I don’t need a phone Jarvis. I’ll be back around six, which will give me enough time to finish my business before I have to call Heimdall at seven.”

“I understand sir, but I really must insist that you--”

“Jarvis please, I’m afraid I’m not in the mood.”

“May I ask where you are going?” The AI asked after a long moment. “I may be able to assist you.”

“I have absolutely no idea where I’m going. Maybe a bar. Maybe a whorehouse. Maybe I’ll go get my mother a DVD player of her own.” He took a deep shuttering breath. “I just don’t know.”

“I understand sir, there is a twenty-four hour Best Buy at One Union Square South, would you like me to call you a cab? Or shall I have security will drop you off there?”

“A cab will be fine. Thank you.” Using the reflective surfaces in the elevator, Loki brushed his hair back and straightened his jacket.

“Jarvis, if Stark...” Loki paused, trying to make his tone a bit more upbeat. “Well, never mind that. Jarvis, thank you for all your help this evening. I really do appreciate it.”

“It was my pleasure sir.”

The rest of the ride was silent. Just before the elevator door opened Jarvis spoke to him again. “Mister Odinson, security informs me that they are holding a cab for you by the west entrance.”

OoooO

A few hours after he had arrived, Loki left one very happy employee at the Best Buy store. Over the course of his shopping, the young man had guided him from department to department helping him select a dependable rechargeable DVD player, a Nook electronic reader, a very expensive digital camera with all the accessories, a digital photo printer, photographic inks, the very latest 3D Printer, consumables for both printer, numerous DVD's and a Visa gift card that he could use to buy books for the Nook immediately. He had confided to Loki that while he received no commission on the items he sold, he did receive preferential treatment for hours and departments if he was a top seller. Since Loki thought someone should be happy today, he told the young man to add service contracts to everything he bought, even though he knew he would never be using them.

When Loki mentioned that he had to leave the country in the morning for an extended stay in a remote location with no stores or internet access, his salesman turned him over to a friend of his in the technical department who assisted him in setting up the Nook and using the gift card to download numerous books for his mother.

Not that Loki couldn't have done it himself. Eventually. Jarvis had mostly done it for him when he lived on Midgard, so paying a tech worker who did things like this all the time for customers was just faster. And one less thing he would have to do when he got back to Stark Tower. And if the store thought he was being charged for a particularly complicated computer repair, Loki was sure he didn't care.

Exiting the store, Loki looked at his watch and decided that even adding in travel time, he had more than an hour to kill until it was time to get a cab back to Stark Tower. While he was certain that all of the books he had on sd cards were DRM cracked, he decided to download a few more books for his mother, perhaps some gardening books? Digital photography books? History books? Or perhaps even a selection of Midgardian romances that might appeal to her tastes rather than the book he normally received which were mainly were science, engineering and only the occasional novel.

OoooO

“So Loki,” said the soft voice, “What are you doing here by yourself? You and Tony have a fight?”

Startled at the unwelcomed yet familiar voice, Loki hastily ordered his expression to something less devastated than he felt and lifted his head to see Natasha Romanoff pull out a chair at his table.

Since he had time to kill, Loki had carried his double bagged purchases, the boxes strapped together with fiberglass reinforced packing and a handle, four blocks away to a restaurant called

the Coffee Shop at 29 Union Square West. At his request, the hostess seated him near a window so he could get wifi from the park across the street. It was due to close in an hour, but he was assured that they would get his order taken and served with more than enough time to eat. Not that Loki was really hungry, but if ordering breakfast was the price he paid for brooding somewhere that wasn't Stark Tower, so be it.

"You know," said the casually dressed assassin, scooting her chair up to the table, "this place closes from five thirty am to six thirty for cleaning."

"Ah. Agent Romanoff." Loki drawled, outwardly bored and inwardly astonished at how bad his luck had been during this visit. "To what do I owe the honor of your company?" He placed his downloading e-reader on the table and leaned back in his chair steadily regarding his unwelcome visitor.

"I see you've been doing some retail therapy," she said pointing at his bags and boxes with a strange little smile. "You and Tony have a fight?"

Mask fully in place he answered her, "No Agent Romanoff, I have not fought with Tony. I wanted to get a few last minute presents for my mother."

"So where's Tony," she asked, grabbing his closed menu and pointing out her order to the waitress who had just approached the table. "And coffee, black."

Loki shook his head "Still asleep I imagine," he told her. "Pancakes, bacon, home fries, orange juice and water please," Loki said, looking up at the waitress with a perfectly distracting smile, eyes crinkled up in good humor.

"Right away," the woman said with a wide grin, before hurrying away, only to stop at the kitchen service hatch to peer back at him.

"So..." Romanoff tipped her head a bit, regarding him with slightly narrowed eyes. "You didn't have a fight with Tony, and he is currently sleeping. Neither of which are lies... You didn't look very happy in the store or while you were waiting here to order... Yet you felt a need to charm the waitress once I sat down... So what is wrong with his picture?"

"What is wrong is that my queue has finished downloading. Do you have an e-reader Agent Romanoff?"

"Yes."

Loki handed her the reader. "Then start downloading books and I will talk to you. Anything garden, historic, romantic or biographic that you think my mother might like." When she made no move to pick up the reader he continued. "Or I will continue to do it and ignore you."

That did it; Natasha picked up the reader and started tapping links. "You know, I've heard the food here is kind of hit or miss."

"I'm not hungry, so I don't really care." He told her pulling his purchases under the table so they wouldn't be in anyone's way. Natasha's eyes flicked up at him.

"So why are you out here, without a handler? What are you doing on Earth? Why shouldn't we just arrest you?"

Loki snickered blackly. "Go ahead and try Agent Romanoff. There is no one on earth right now who is more watched than I am. If I miss my curfew, the All Father himself will be down here

within the hour to retrieve me. If I miss it through no fault of my own, then his not inconsiderate wrath will fall on someone beside myself.”

Loki leaned forward and whispered to her in wicked glee, “Please. Arrest me. Take me back to your heli-carrier. Take me to a secure SWORD facility.” He brushed a strand of his long inky black hair behind an ear. “Of course I personally wouldn’t take me to any location you are... fond of. As I doubt very much it would escape without a great deal of damage.”

“Ah, breakfast.” He winked at the waitress as she sat down their breakfast. Taking a sip of his juice he nodded at Natasha, “I think your downloads are finished, you need to queue more books.”

Natasha insisted on accompanying him back to Stark Tower. So instead of the cab he had planned on riding back in, he rode with her in a SWORD vehicle with two other agents in the front seat. Fortunately for Loki’s mood, Jarvis refused to allow her or the agents out of the parking garage and sent the tower security personnel down in Stark’s private elevator. They expertly pried Loki and his packages away from the agents. Stark had a habit of firing the ones who let SWORD do anything without a court order.

Loki thanked the agents, kissed Natasha’s hand and finally made it unmolested into the elevator. The security guards only rode with him until they reached the first floor. Loki rode the rest of the way in silence, Jarvis scanning him and his belongings for listening devices.

Loki’s spirits descended even as the elevator rose to his old floor.

OoooO

A short time after returning his wallet and watch to his old room, Loki entered Stark’s bedroom silently. It had taken him a few minutes to talk Jarvis into letting him in, but finally the AI decided that the benefit to his master outweighed a general privacy order. Especially since Loki still had authorization to be anywhere in the tower he wanted to be, at any time he wanted to go there.

Holding his hand in readiness over her face, he gently shook the red head’s shoulder. He had to do it two more times before she woke up with a slight start at the sight of a man standing over her. That it was not the man she had fucked before she fell asleep doubtless made it more bewildering. His hand ghosted over her lips in the low light of the bedroom and he whispered in her ear, “I do apologize, but you need to get up now.”

“Quietly,” he softly admonished her, averting his eyes politely and handing her a robe. He pointed to her clothes, purse and shoes neatly placed on the bench at the bottom of the bed. After she had gathered her belongings, Loki guided her to the door, “There is a powder room right beside the elevator. Turn left, you can’t miss it. I’ve left the light on for you. Go down to the first floor, Security has been notified you are coming, they will pay for a cab to take you home.”

Bewildered, but uncomplaining the robe clad woman started to exit the room, but then stopped in the doorway and looked up at him.

“Who are you?” She whispered nervously, lifting her free hand to try and detangle her wild, bed head hair.

“The boyfriend.” He whispered back.

At her look of horror, Loki gifted her with a lopsided grin. “Trust me; you need to get out of here as quickly as possible. It might get very ugly, very soon.”

She fled quietly down the hallway, her bare feet softly slapping on the marble flooring was the

only noise she made.

Loki smiled faintly and quietly closed and locked the door.

OoooO

Tony was impatiently pacing in his living room when that incredibly bright light that was the hallmark of interstellar, or at least Asgardian travel flashed onto his terrace. His penthouse looked festive and welcoming and he had made sure that Pepper was in town and would be available in a couple of hours for dinner. A dinner that was not going to be 'take out' this year. Instead, the billionaire had a whole pack of chefs and their assistants down in the big industrial kitchen on his party floor beaver away on tonight's dinner. Additionally a famous dessert chef and his assistants were making dozens of different kinds of one-shot and mini desserts to appeal to the god of mischief's sweet tooth. Several of each so Pepper and Loki wouldn't fight over their favorites.

A freaking truck load of packages waited, already packed in large military equipment duffle bags by the terrace door. So many packages in fact that the minute he saw the lights descending, Tony shouldered two of them and staggered out to the scored landing site. He was going to send part of Loki's loot back with Heimdall, just to ease the logistics of transporting it. Not being anyone's fool of course, despite recent evidence to the contrary, the engineer had labeled the outside of the duffels to Frigga's attention. He doubted very much that anyone would interfere with items addressed to Asgard's queen.

Tony had everything planned to be the perfect apology.

Everything except for what to do when Heimdall appeared on the landing site with Thor instead of Loki.

Chapter 1b – Completely and totally screwed

Tony had seen the video recordings. Even heard what Loki had whispered to the redhead lying beside him, and yes Tony was well aware that high gain, high fidelity cameras were not normally a part of anyone else's security installation. Anyhow, Loki apparently had not intended to create a scene, in fact he didn't even try to wake Tony up at all.

All in all it should have been hilarious, her expression as she woke and was handed her clothes by a man she hadn't slept with, the deadpan way Loki had just whipped out the whole, 'I'm the boyfriend' statement and her taking off like a scared bunny, robe flapping behind her as she accelerated down the hallway. And doubtless it would have gone into Tony's favorite clip file if not for all the non-funny stuff that had followed.

After showing her out of the room, Loki had walked over to the bed, his unconcerned, slightly smug, Loki mask firmly in place. The god just stood there, looking down at the sleeping Tony for several minutes. While his expression was neutral enough, the slight slump of that normally straight back told Tony that his god-buddy was upset.

Eventually, Loki had given the faintest of sighs and gone over to sit on the now vacant side of the bed. After a moment...and a highly suspicious pass of his hand over his eyes, the trickster had taken Tony's wrist and placed a glowing disk and his palm over Frigga's rune. Loki just sat there with his head bowed while the mini light show of the rune recharging took place. After the light had dissipated, the god had gotten up, pocketing the spent stone. He then straightened up those wide shoulders of his and walked out of the room, eyes straight ahead.

Jarvis' cameras had followed him as he walked through the living room where he picked up his

bags without looking at them and immediately walked to the BiFrost pad calling for Heimdall.

After a minute or two, the only evidence that the trickster had been on Midgard at all was the surveillance video of his footsteps slowly filling in with falling snow. Footsteps that had been gone by the time Tony had realized what had happened and raced out to the terrace in sweat pants and t-shirt and bare feet to look up at the cloud covered sky.

Chapter 1c – Why are you here?

When he had woken up that morning, Tony had not even realized there had been a problem. Yeah, his bed was empty. But there were plenty of women who decided to slip out early enough that they could get home in their evening wear with dignity. After all, very few people actually liked an early morning walk of shame. And it wasn't like Tony's reputation gave any of them hope that if they stuck around long enough, they might get a chance to be his one true love. Because he was Tony Stark and he was never going to hook up with a one night stand, no matter how good they looked.

So he had eventually rolled out of bed, enjoyed several minutes of after sex stretching, taken a shower, gotten dressed...as much as he ever dressed when he was just going to get a cup of coffee and strolled barefoot out to the living room.

"Morning Jarvis."

"Actually it is afternoon, sir," His AI replied in a slightly testy tone. "Agent Romanoff will be here in a little over an hour, she has left you several messages. Also, Ms. Potts would like you to call her as soon as possible.

Crap. While there may be a lot of things worse than an unexpected visit by Natasha, offhand Tony just couldn't think of any.

"I need a damn drink and I need my caffeine. I refuse to have an early morning, or even mid-afternoon visit with the red menace without at least one spiked coffee in me." Tony huffed stomping over to the bar and reaching under it for something to splash in his coffee.

In the place where he had last left the whiskey, there were several very odd bottles. For convenience, each lower shelf had a motion sensor activated light strip. So the second that Tony reached under the bar, he was able to get a really good look at those odd, other worldly bottles sitting where his scotch should have been, as well as a pile of t-shirts and some plush toys sitting beside them.

And that is when the Tony's day went from crap to completely and totally fucked.

Sliding to the floor because his legs wouldn't hold him, Tony crouched there burying his face in his hands.

"Javis," he croaked pitifully, "please, please, please tell me that Loki is still in the tower."

"Unfortunately sir, he was under his normal twelve hour time constraint and left at his usual time, six forty-five a.m." Jarvis replied in a severely disapproving voice before continuing. "I did try numerous times to contact you sir, and also tried to tell you when you arrived with your... companion." The AI paused a moment when Tony clutched his head in pain, but then continued relentlessly. "Unfortunately, you muted me and I was unable to say anything to you when you failed to notice all of the items you had laid out for him were gone."

Okay, this was bad.

“Ah...where was he when I got home?” Tony asked, not able to take his mental vision off the train wreck that was yesterday.

“Just on the other side of the terrace window sir, watching you exit the elevator.”

Yeah, it had been too much to hope that maybe he had been in the lab.

“Please tell me he didn’t sit out there all night waiting for his ride home,” Tony begged, knowing that he was the worst friend and the most insensitive lover ever. Not that this should be anything unknown to him by now...but still, it’s no wonder he never had an intimate relationship that lasted. Hell, even his second go round with Pepper had lasted less than a year before she couldn’t take him again. And she was his best friend.

She always said it was the danger, but he bet it was that heaped on top of all the other crap Tony had made her put up with.

“No, sir. He went out.”

“Christ.” Tony breathed, rocking forward on his knees and grabbing the top of the bar for support.

“By himself? Out where, Jarvis?”

One god damn day a year I need to be attentive and I can’t even fucking manage that. Not even the whole god damn day either, just twelve fucking hours, he told himself angrily. I am lower than fucking pond-scum.

“He had several locations in mind sir, I know he visited one of them, but I am not sure where he was after that.” Jarvis said somewhat evasively.

“So where did he go?” Tony asked fighting the sick feeling that threatened to rise within him.

Deciding he had spent enough time on the floor behind bar, Tony grabbed a handy, but not other worldly bottle and pulled himself up, coffee forgotten he made his way to the couch as Jarvis continued.

“He spent at least two hours that I can be sure of in an electronics store, where he went other than that, I’m not sure. He must have been spending cash.” Jarvis said reprovingly. Jarvis hated not being able to track people because they were spending cash. He often became quite snippy with Tony on those rare occasions when he used cash rather than one of his cards.

“So he didn’t say where else he wanted to go?”

“Originally he was trying to decide between a bar or a whorehouse, finding an all-night electronics store was an afterthought. But I thought it best that he at least begin there, so I ordered a cab to deposit him at that address. He refused to take a cell phone so I was unable to keep better track of his locations.”

Tony moaned closing his eyes in pain and let his head drop heavily on the back of the couch.

“Additionally, sir, before Mister Odinson would spend anything at the store, he asked me to total up the cost of all the items he had been provided with over the years and deduct that amount from his account to repay you. I have made a note of the incoming credit in your expense file.”

If Jarvis had a body, Tony was pretty sure the AI would have slapped him in the back of the head by now.

And as if dealing with a disapproving Jarvis wasn't bad enough, afterwards he had to deal with the ladies. Tony was hard put to say which reaming was worse.

Knowing a lot of the back ground, including some of the intimate stuff, Pepper hit some points that were like knife thrusts to the gut. Natasha on the other hand, while she was not privy to as much inside information, made some disturbingly good guesses and was able to detail the absolute devastation she observed before Loki had known she was watching him. Tony's luck being the way it was, neither lady spared him any of their thoughts on how big an asshole they considered him. Worse still, this was apparently going to be a bellwether moment in his life. Now whenever Pepper thought Tony was being not as helpful as he could have been she had taken to muttering stuff along the lines of 'He can't even get it together once a year, what was *I* expecting?'

OoooO

While Tony continued to receive his 'Queen Frigga Facilitated' monthly communications from Loki, they were all now project related. The only one he'd received all year that hadn't concerned the project was a short hand written note from Loki to let Tony know what day his rune would be renewed.

Jumping on news of Loki impending visit, like a starving cat on a discarded fish head, Tony had an entire evening planned. Groveling. Catered dinner. Groveling. Scrumptious deserts. Groveling. Bribes, err... Rather say presents not bribes. After all that he figured he would wind up the evening with just a bit more groveling. When Pepper pointed out that he had never gone to quite this much trouble when she was mad at him, Tony informed her that he hadn't needed quite the same full court press with her since she never vanished off the face of the Earth twelve hours later.

The penthouse was decorated for the 'Yule Holiday' to the hilt and if he said so himself, it looked incredible. Tony and Jarvis had checked all the preparations several times and everything was set to go off without a hitch...

Until Thor showed up instead of Loki.

OoooO

Tony was devastated.

Thor.

Tony didn't want to see Thor, he wanted to see Loki.

The billionaire had worried that this year's visit might be awkward, but he hadn't imagined that Loki would miss it all together.

"Hey Thor...ummm, where's Loki? Is he coming later?" Tony asked, heart sinking at the improbability of that happening. "Please take these to the queen, Goldie," He handed the duffle bags off to the surprised Heimdall with barely a glance in his direction.

"Friend Tony, I can take those back with me when I leave." Thor reached out his hands to grab the duffle bag straps, but Tony slapped Thor's hands away.

"Leave it, big guy, there's a ton of other stuff that needs to be taken back, let the shiny dude take these to your mom. It will be two bags we don't have to worry about later." Practically pushing the bags at the freakishly large Asgardian, Tony took a deep breath and tried to shove down his panic before addressing the large blonde god in front of him.

“Thor,” Tony almost whined. “Where’s Loki?”

“Thank you, Heimdall, please make sure those make it to the queen safely.” Thor said, sparing the watcher only a briefest glance before grabbing Tony’s upper arm and pulling the unresisting engineer towards the penthouse doors.

Once they had threaded through the various duffle bags just inside the terrace doors, Thor allowed Tony to shake off his grip. Leaning his hammer against the wall, and dropping the two duffle bags he had brought from Asgard, the god walked over and dropped onto the nearest sofa. He looked up at the ceiling for several long moments, obviously marshaling his thoughts before shifting his gaze to the scowling inventor who was standing cross armed in front of him.

“Where. Is. Loki?”

Thor rubbed a tired hand over his face. “Tony, please give me your arm and then I will explain everything.” He request in a low weary voice, reaching out for Tony’s right hand.

Glaring at muscle bound blonde, Tony thrust his right hand forward peevishly. Thor briefly examined the faded rune, before placing his hand, with one of Queen Frigga’s disks over it to recharge the mark.

“Just for your information my friend, you should know this does not always have to be done every year. The protections will last as long as the rune is visible. The darker the rune, the more power is available to ward off aging, injuries or illness.”

“Don’t care, Thor. Where’s your brother?” Tony demanded flatly.

Releasing the genius’ hand, Thor looked sadly up at him and asked beseechingly. “I know you and Loki are still writing back and forth monthly. Did he say nothing of the deal he made with Odin last year right after he returned?”

Tony’s heart sank thinking about the many deals Odin had offered the trickster. *Please not marriage; please not a ban from Midgard. Please!*

“Ah. No. He’s only been discussing business with me. I was kind of bastard last year, and your brother, rightfully so, is pretty miffed with me.”

“Oh. Perhaps that is why.” Thor muttered slowly, his frown deepening. “Last year, shortly after he returned from his trip he told the All Father he would accept a return of some of his magic, in exchange for not taking this year’s trip to Midgard.”

“Oh.” Tony said in a small voice.

Thor’s smile was rueful, “My brother is quite the bargainer, he stipulated that his magic be returned that very day. He regained his abilities to do scrying, so he could check on progress at the work site or any of the material suppliers even if he was in the library or otherwise occupied. Of course the All Father wished him to wait until his next trip was scheduled for this ability to be returned, but Loki told him if he had to wait a year, he’d take the trip. So father relented.”

Thor gave a sad chuckle. “I think many of the things that Loki does; Midgard, battle dance, avoiding the feasts, refusing a rich wife, not speaking to anyone...I think they are perhaps done to aggravate father and give him an incentive to bribe Loki to quit doing them.”

“Yeah, well your bro is the tricky one that way.”

But not Midgard.

We aren't a contrived irritation, Loki really likes coming here, Loki didn't want to leave. He wants to return here, to... Us... Tony told himself stoutly, but unable to keep a tiny thrill of doubt from running down his spine. Trickster god after all. Maybe he set up his reluctance to leave and his insistence on returning up as part of a long con on Odin. Or Tony.

But Tony really, really didn't even want to consider that. He needed to think of something else.

"Bribes? But Loki's a prince, he doesn't need a rich--" Tony tried to say with certainty, only to be interrupted by Thor.

"No... My friend, Loki no longer has estates. His original... Transgression my mother calls it, was deemed treason and his properties and valuables were confiscated to the crown. He has no personal revenues."

"Oh." Tony's heart sank. He recalled the simple clothes that Loki had taken to wearing once he returned to Asgard. The god had claimed he preferred less fussy clothes now. But what if those were the only things he had to wear? A possibility that was more than likely and something Tony should have considered earlier if he had bothered to use his supposedly genius brain. After all it had surprised Tony to see the Trickster actually wearing an Avenger's sweatshirt during one of his previous visits. Factoring in Loki's previous disdain for Earthgardian casual wear and the god's own preference and delight in fine clothing indicated clearly that, genius or not... Tony was an idiot for not making the connection.

"Everything, Thor?" He asked in a small voice. "So where does he get the money to live? Do they pay him for his work on the BiFrost?"

"No, Tony, he is a prisoner working on a task for Asgard. Mother tried to provide him with a stipend out of her personal funds, but Loki refused. He did not want to get her in anymore trouble with father. The only exception is that he has asked her to purchase various items for you." Thor pointed to the two duffle bags he had brought. "Technically those items are listed on her expense accounts as retainer payments for you as her personal servitor." The Thunderer sighed distractedly tracing the seam where a leather inset joined the cloth of his trousers. He looked up at the very distressed Tony. "Due to safety concerns he lives in his old rooms and is of course provided with the same clothing, personal care items and food that the servants receive. With the exception of proper garb on those rare times he is bidden to attend dinner with the court. Mother had been forbidden to supply him with anything else. He is after all no longer a prince, but rather a crown prisoner."

OoooO

Chapter 1d Introspection and Ice packs

Somehow, and he wasn't exactly sure how he managed to do it, Tony had convinced Thor that it would be a shame not to see Jane while he was on Earth. Jarvis, bless his circuits, had only taken ten minutes to contact Jane, set up a date for her and Pikachu and get a Boston based helicopter in the air to snatch her up from the grounds of MIT.

It wasn't like Tony had any appetite right now, so someone ought to benefit from all the awesome arrangements he had made. A little part of him hoped that maybe Thor would be impressed and tell Loki about all of the trouble that Tony had gone through in order to apologize to the dark haired god. Additionally, it kept Thor close at hand so Tony could talk to him again before he was zapped back up to fairy land.

Which left them all here; Thunder Pants was down on the party floor, no doubt bothering the crap out of the chefs. Jane was scheduled to be delivered to the Tower's landing pad in just over an hour for a romantic gourmet dinner and possibly a night of whoopee in one of the guest rooms with Thor. And Tony desperately trying to think through a killer stress headache while slumped at the kitchen table shifting an ice pack from one temple to the other.

Trying being the key word in that whole thought. Come on Stark, he berated himself, you're a fucking genius, so genius your skank cheating ass out of this one.

Even though Tony was a genius and an Olympic caliber, **second to none** bull-shitter who could pretty much talk or figure his way out of anything given time and opportunity... The problem was... This problem being...

Tony wiped his eyes on the damp terrycloth sleeve covering his half-melted ice pack. Not because he was tearing up or anything, but more because his eyes were suddenly burning and the cool dampness felt good.

Fuck it.

The problem was that there was no damn way for him to talk with Loki. Oh hell yeah he could talk *at* him, but he couldn't talk *to* him. Fuck knows he'd tried, but not one of the messages of a personal nature that he'd sent to Asgard during the last year had been responded to in any way. Hell he was pretty sure Loki hadn't even listened to most of them. After four months of no replies from Loki other than those pertaining to their various projects, Tony had started mixing the answers to Loki's project questions with numerous personal messages in the voice, video and data files he sent to Asgard. Loki had never answered any of them and merely restated his own in the Q&A file that they passed back and forth. By the sixth month Tony had started leaving apologies in that file. At first they were simply deleted and when he tried copy protecting them so that Loki couldn't delete them the god created another file and everything, except for them, had been copied over to it.

The worst thing was that in the last seven years that Loki has been on Asgard Tony, had mostly gotten out of the habit of listening to music while he worked. Prior to his being an ass, every month Tony had gotten thirty personal recordings that the god had made for him. Additionally during the day, Loki would often turn on a hidden microphone. The god would then occasionally rant about something project related that was making his life difficult, or tell Tony something that had occurred to him that they might want to think about. However most of the time Loki would softly explain what he was doing; verbalizing all of his actions or thoughts on whatever task he was currently working on. Occasionally Loki would reference a file name so Jarvis could integrate a picture or short video into their official project transcript while popping it up on a screen for Tony to look at. Who knew what Loki's guards and workers thought about him constantly mumbling or occasionally doing whatever it was he did to hide the fact that he was taking a picture or short video.

Listening to Loki's work recordings had been like a soothing but extremely thought provoking Asgardian version of NPR's '*All things Considered*'. Every evening before he went to sleep for the night Loki made him a video, usually running for between thirty minutes and an hour. It was like a Denis Leary version of the Prairie Home Companion meets Ted Talks. Snark, basic news, storytelling and tech talk all done in that sinfully delicious accent of Loki's. While Fury would kill for some of the stuff that Loki was sharing about what was going on in Asgard and the other Realms, Tony just liked listening to the god's take on what was going on around him and as a visual reference of how Loki was looking and feeling that particular day.

However, now he didn't get any kind of additional comments. Furthermore, for the past year even Loki's work sessions recordings were short, concise, to the point and completely project related, not even background speculation on various theory's. The more personal, recorded evening chats, with a visual of the god? Those had stopped completely. That was why Tony had been so excited that there was finally a note from Loki that wasn't project related. Admittedly it hadn't been much of a note, just a notification that Tony's rune renewal would take place as scheduled and that a date had been set for it to happen.

Tony had figured he was in for an evening of major begging and apologies on his part and frankly a lot of justified screaming on Loki's. Hence all the presents and the scrumptious dinner and dessert plans. Tony figured he would intersperse bribes, which Loki was always open too, with heartfelt begging for forgiveness. One of the two had been bound to work. He never figured that Loki would be so mad that he would stop coming completely and send Thor instead.

"Sir, Ms Potts wishes to know what time she is expected for dinner." Groaning Tony slumped over his kitchen table and buried his head in his arms. He had promised Pep a great dinner this evening.

Tipping his face sideways, so he wasn't talking into his ice pack Tony started issuing instructions. His voice was washed out and watery.

"Jarvis, ask the chefs when dinner is going to be ready and have them plate two meals and for Minon to bring up here. Make sure they also send up several desserts that Pepper would like. Chocolate ones for sure, maybe if we get enough chocolate in her she won't kill me. Let her know there was a change in plans, but tell her I really need to talk to her. Time it so that Pep and dinner arrives at the same time. Let her in when it gets here and give me a five minutes heads up before she arrives."

Chapter 1e - Let's make a deal Asgard Style

As private retreats went, this one was a pretty good one. The theme was all stone and gold, like every room he had seen so far while here, but the woven hangings and tapestries softened it up quite a bit, and added a nice touch of color.

"Starkson, I received your message and thought it best for you to come talk with me in person."

Frigga was sitting in, what on Earth would be called a throne; here apparently it was just some place for the queen to rest her hiney while talking to guests. But as large and ornate as it was, Frigga owned the damn thing. But then he supposed it wasn't like she would have a floral wingback or a rocking recliner or anything in her private audience chamber.

"Please, call me Tony," he told her yet again. "After all we're almost family; or rather we will be if we can iron out a few details." Tony gave her an endearing smile.

She looked at both of them a moment. "I admit I was not expecting you to bring your consort to this meeting."

"Old news your Majesty. Ms. Potts is the CEO of my company, we are no longer consorting."

"Anthony!" Pepper hissed giving his blue suit jacket an admonitory tug. "Be serious."

"Ah, your union has been legally dissolved?" Frigga's eyes shifted back and forth between the two of them, watching intently.

"Actually your Majesty, we never finalized it."

Frigga sat back in her throne with a low, ‘Hummmm’.

“So what exactly are you proposing Stark-- Tony, I have your document, but I would hear it in your own words.”

“I am proposing an alliance between my house and yours.” He smiled at the queen with his most winning Tony Stark smile.

The smile he only pulled out when he was in real trouble with Pepper.

“A union without the possibility of producing an heir is not legal in Asgard.”

“Well then I guess it’s a good thing that Loki can shape shift into a female at any given time, huh? I mean if he can bear a horse, shifting so that he can bear a mortal child should be no trouble for him... or her... at all.”

She frowned, “Loki is a shape shifter and can become female of course, but he can also shift to his natural state which is both. It is a Jotun trait that carried over. It was once not unheard of even in Æsir Seiðr masters who were male.”

“So yay. Two ways that he could have a kid...” Tony hastily corrected himself after a puzzled look flitted across the queen’s face, “I mean child. He has ability to have a child. Not that he has to, or I want him to, just that he can fulfill the Asgardian legal requirement to allow the union. So it’s all good.”

“Why? Why are you proposing this alliance? What makes you think the All Father will entertain your suit?” Frigga fixed Tony with a gimlet stare. “And fond as I am of you Anthony Stark, what makes you think I will support your cause?”

Tony smirked. “I think I can come up with a few advantages that might interest Loki-dad. As for your support.... Oh, I don’t know, perhaps because I have a proven track record of keeping your baby boy safe, even from himself... Also from the stories he’s told me over the years, with only the occasional minor hiccup--”

A strangled cough interrupted him.

“Shut it Pep. As I was saying, Loki had told me that he’s been happier with seeing me even only once a year than with any other Asgardian he’s interacted with in the last few centuries. Family aside I’m sure.”

Frigga’s voice was incredulous. “Minor hiccup?”

“Okay fine, the last one was a doozy, but I’ll do anything to fix that. Including hauling my ass to another realm and pledging a complete life style change to try to make things right.”

OoooO

Despite the over the top tackiness of Asgard in general, the throne room is impressive. And in the several minutes that Odin has been staring at him, totally distracting. Pepper nudged Tony back to full awareness as Odin broke the silence.

“Why should I believe that you are the best person for Asgard to form an alliance between us and Midgard by way of Loki becoming allied with your house?” Odin asked, sitting on his huge big gold, oh so very gold throne, looking down his nose like every petty dictator in every Grade-B sci-fi movie ever made. It was the robe that did it. Seriously whoever thought that was a good look on

an old dude? It was like an elaborately embroidered nightshirt with armour over the chest. It just didn't work. Honestly, you almost expected the guy to be wearing a pair of wicked good slippers from L.L. Bean.

Apparently big daddy Odin was still pissed that Tony had been Frigga's go to guy when Asgard had their little prison abuse problem. Or maybe Od-meister was still bent because Tony was the reason that Loki was rocking some serious Tech-Magic these days.

Tech stuff that is so old school as far as Asgard is concerned that Old One Eye couldn't ever hope to understand, he thought smugly.

Tony, Pepper, Odin, Frigga, Thor and a surprised-slash-distraught Loki were all in the throne room. They were alone, now that the guards that normally stood at the foot of the throne had been temporarily banished to the hallway.

"Maybe because I don't want to join with your son, I want to ally myself with your wife's daughter." Tony rolled his eyes a bit at the grimace Odin was throwing down at him. "Okay... daughter for a certain value of the word as it applies to Loki here."

"And what makes you think we would agree to this? Loki's union with a mortal?"

"I don't see why you wouldn't; you're all but advertising him for sale to the highest bidder." Tony snapped, managing not to flinch at the reaction his word received.

Which was far from easy with the ominous rumble of Thor's thunder overhead, the harsh objections of two of the biggest fucking ravens Tony has ever seen, not to mention Loki's growl and flesh stripping glare.

Refusing to be cowed Tony's voice was slow and hard, "I am Tony Stark, I **will not** be out bid. Especially not by a couple of two bit princesses with no power at all, even in their own families, let alone their realms. Ladies you can't even get him to agree to court in the first place, I might add."

"And what makes you think he will be any more receptive towards your suit?" Odin asked, annoyed but curious.

"How about because he already is," Tony told the king with a confident smile.

"Was. As in past tense," Loki said frostily.

Odin pinned the darker prince with a stare. "Loki, I will ask for your input when I want it." Odin ignored the temper that flared in the younger prince's furious green eyes, continuing in the same implacable tone, "Until then, you will remain silent. Do you understand?"

"Do you, All Father. understand that I am not a brood mare to be sold to whoever wants to upgrade their family stock?"

Pepper and Odin both were vying for who had the most heartfelt sigh of exasperation.

Well there was no doubt in he's still majorly peeved at me, Tony thought, knowing in his heart that this was going to get ugly before it was all finished.

"My lady, I would suggest that you and the princes retire to your private hall. I would have a private discussion with this petitioner." He glanced over at Tony, "Would you like the Lady Potts to stay with them also?"

Tony laughed, "Oh hell no. Lady Potts is my chief advisor; I think she needs to stay with me. Besides she had documents I think you would want to see."

OoooO

It had taken several minutes to extricate themselves from the protesting Frigga and Loki. Thor was no help at all there, since his mother ignored the Thunderer and continued to argue in an undertone with Odin and Thor's efforts to calm his brother had pretty much the opposite effect. Finally, Odin had simply beckoned them to follow him, walked to a door near the rear of the throne and waved them through shutting it firmly on the other three.

Odin of course sat at the head of the small conference table with Tony on his left and Pepper sitting right beside Tony. Leaning back, his chair looking much more comfortable than Tony's chair, Odin calmly asked, "Why?"

"Why not?" Tony shot back. "Hey. I understand that you might not appreciate it, which is really good because if you did that would be more than creepy, but Loki is a really decorative kinda guy." Shaking his head at the disbelief in Odin's eye, he continued. "Maybe not here, where muscle bound blondes seem to be in vogue. But he has that whole Metrosexual slash Rock of Ages thing going on for him." Tony paused as if pondering something important and then said contemplatively, "With maybe just a touch of your more dangerous goth."

And that is the part Tony really like. The dangerous part, not the goth, although if anyone could rock the goth black makeup and clothes, it would be his Loki.

"I couldn't get any traction with him while he was imprisoned on Ear--, Midgard, which makes sense, because technically I was his jailer. So that was just not flying for him, and quite honestly I perfectly understood." He flashed Odin a toothy grin, "But afterwards we got along quite well... And since you guys are looking to unload the cost of caring and feeding one princely prisoner. To be specific your younger prince who is already considered to be egri for being a master of magic... I figured we could make a deal. I'm looking for a magic using asset for my company. Loki already has proven value as a researcher and is pretty damn hot to look at, which is a bonus as far as I am concerned."

Odin raised his hand, index finger tapping his lips. Since he knew he was babbling, and that was a pretty clear instruction to hush, Tony decided to see what his Odin-ness wanted to say.

"This isn't just about money."

"Of course not," Tony grinned nastily, "That's just something you're tossing in to try to get Loki to agree with your plans. It's really about you keeping control of an asset. You want to find some leverage on your youngest that won't end up with you sleeping on the couch because you've got mommy upset about how her baby boy is being treated.

Tony had spent years letting Fury's moods roll off of him, so the evil look that Odin was currently tossing his way was not really enough to slow him down.

Although he did make a mental note not to mention Frigga anymore, if he can at all avoid it.

Sensing that Tony was treading on thin ice, Pepper pulled out a sheaf of papers denoting what Tony had already sent to Asgard as surety for his proposal and passed it to Odin.

Odin paused a moment, the brick color fading during the time it took him to read Pepper's proposal. When he was finished, he was once again wearing his calm and impassive 'King of

Kings' expression.

After nudging Tony warningly, Pepper passed two other folders over to the king. One was a partial review of Tony's personal net worth. Partial, because even that was impressive and Pepper believed in never giving anyone the full story on that if she could avoid it. The other was a rundown of the assets Tony had in place already that could prevent the god of mischief from getting himself and Asgard by extension into any more trouble when he was on Midgard.

"How is this even necessary?" Odin asked, tapping the second folder. "His currently abilities should not require such precautions to be in place."

"Hey, I'm willing to pay full price, but I want the whole magic package." Tony said firmly. "Besides, it will sweeten Loki on the deal. Heck you can even take credit for it. Tell him it's a betrothal gift or some damn thing."

Seeing that Odin was looking less thoughtful than he had been a few minutes ago, Tony decided to sweeten the deal for him too.

"Look, there has to be some damn rune or something I could use to track him if he decides to take a jaunt yes? And Frigga certainly couldn't object too much if I agreed to a tracking rune to make Earthgardian officials more comfortable with him being back on earth."

They sat there in silence several long minutes, Odin's hands resting on the dark glossy wood of the table while he pondered.

"One other thing, I can offer," Tony said quietly. "I already know that being Yotim doesn't automatically translate to shape shifter." Odin started almost imperceptibly.

"Apparently Loki is both. Unlike the other contenders I don't care that he is a Yotim. Also you don't have to worry that I'll ever tell anyone or make a fuss about it at a later date if the news ever gets out. I understand that this little tidbit of information would be a total deal breaker for the other contenders and their families. Even if they found out about the whole Yotim thing after the fact and not just because it means that Loki's adopted and not *really* part of the royal family.

Tony raised both hands placatingly at the fury sliding across Odin's face. "But I don't care about the adoption thing either. In fact I think you need to tell him about both soon in order to avoid a repeat of what happened last time when he found out by accident. And I promise to get him as much help as I can to be okay with that."

"Earth has lots of Doctor's, err... Healers trained to help people to learn to accept emotional problems like being adopted and other... things in a healthy way." Pepper trailed off when Odin swung his head her way.

Looking pained, Odin's voice rumbled as if coming from a long way away, "What do you know about the Jötnar Son of Stark?"

Tony looked at Pepper, knowing she was also remembering that conversation. She exchanged a quick glance with him and then she shrugged and looked back at Odin, "Loki's one and he doesn't know it anymore, but it is apparently horrible enough to him that when he originally found out he went crazy and tried to kill his brother. His rather unusual gender comes from that heritage, but other Asgardian magic users in the past have also had the same condition due to their Yotim ancestors. And for some reason Loki and Thor both sometimes use it as a swear word," Pepper recited, as if reading from an internal list.

“You forgot, Loki tried to blow up their country when he found out,” Tony reminded her. “So apparently something about them makes him bat-shit crazy.”

“It is pronounced Jotun, Anthony Stark. Many powerful seiðmenn originally came from Jotunheim, if their realm was not so harsh, requiring all their attention, they would most likely rule many of the nine realms. Loki however is only half Jotun, his mother Fárbauti, while not of the highest ranking Æsir, was a very gifted seiðr user.”

Odin pulled a smirk that was pure Fury. It must be the one eye thing that made Odin look like a pasty faced Fury with hair. “Jotun’s are normally blue skinned with solid red eyes and ten foot tall. Loki inherited the blue skin and the red eyes, but his size favored his mother.

“Really? So where did the black hair and green eyes come from? Not that there is anything wrong with those.” Tony asked curiously, not that Tony didn’t think they looked more than fine on the mischief maker. “We can’t all have blonde hair and blue eyes you know.”

His eye bored into Tony’s, “Those are not Loki’s birth features, rather a combination of his personal seiðr and his maternal inheritance. However as long as his partner does not have any Jotun at all in their ancestry, Loki’s children are unlikely to have a Jotun appearance.” He looked at Tony with a very calculating look, as if considering something about Tony’s one hundred percent mortal ancestry that had just brought itself to his attention. “Tell me Starkson, how do you feel about having children?”

Funny he and Pepper had had just this same conversation a few days ago. “Fuck it Pepper, they don’t care about him marrying some foreign princess. They just want him to have a handle they can grab to hold in case he starts to cause trouble or decides to leave when his sentence is finished.”

“And you Tony? Do you want to be that leverage for Asgard? What about heirs? Don’t you think you might like to be a father someday?”

“Why? And fuck up some kid, like my father fucked me up? Like his did to him? Besides if I’m going to live for hundreds of years, why do I need an heir? And if I do, well, he’s had kids before. Our smarts and our looks, our kids would be gods.”

“So that’s what you want Tony?” Pepper asked sourly, “to be the father of a god?”

Tony froze. How did he feel about having kids? He didn’t even want to think about them, he had been very careful his whole life in order to avoid having them. He had even managed to train himself to be sure he was protected against having any, even when he was blind drunk and unable to walk.

“Mister Stark’s board of directors have been pressing him for some years about a succession plan due to his lack of heirs.” Pepper offered quickly, glancing briefly at Tony and widening her eyes slightly in warning before turning her attention back to the elder god.

“Stark International has facilities in all of the major countries in our world and makes a profit of over twenty billion dollars a year, we have several thousand employees. As Mister Stark owns more than half of the company and is its chief innovator, it is extremely important that we have a worthy successor. And to ensure our continued survival we need Mister Stark to have time to properly train his heirs and provide us with an orderly transfer of power to them. While still of course being around to assist or advise as necessary.”

“What she said,” Tony said, trying not to look like a deer in the headlights.

“So you are planning on having heirs soon?”

“Errrr...”

Odin was watching him with an intense concentration, trying to, but hopefully not succeeding in divining Tony’s inner thoughts.

“Ah... That depends. I don’t want just any heir, my father was a genius, I’m a genius, I want my heir to be a genius. Now Loki is also a genius and I might add smoking hot... Coupled with my handsome face and together we should have some seriously gorgeous, scary smart kids. I could live with that.

Okay... Tony did and didn’t like that weird assed light that was shining now in Odin’s eye. That, ‘*All my plans are coming together*’ kind of gleam. This had to be bullshit, since there was no way Odin could have known he would do something as stupid as propose marriage... An *alliance* with Loki. Hell he didn’t even know that he was going to do it at first.

On the other hand, Tony had seen that look many, many times when a deal was close to being stuck. It was a ‘*Let’s see how far I can push*’ look. Apparently Odin was now very interested. So unless Tony was seriously misreading the Space Viking King, it would be Tony’s deal to lose.

Chapter End Notes

As always **comments and reviews are greatly appreciated**, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. May thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Beta'd by the most wonderful **Mima Mia and Reindeer Games 19**

TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS
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There will be references to Male on Male sex. If this is a problem for you please don't read it.

I don’t own the Avengers or Thor, they are the property of Marvel and Disney, and are not my intellectual property. There is no financial gain made from this nor will any be sought. This is for entertainment purposes only.

Fics by Renne Michaels

Palaces of Sand and Gold COMPLETE If Tony and Loki ever broke up, Tony and the SI lawyers wouldn't stand a chance against Odin and his Logmars in a custody struggle. After all third in line for the throne until Thor starts popping out kids surely beat being heir to Stark International. At least as far as Odin is concerned, and he is the guy with the army full of immortals. But what if it wasn't a case of them breaking up and having a full on custody battle? What if it was just a parental struggle against an overzealous grandparent? Already not a fan of Asgard, Tony has to put up with Odin interrupting the Stark family vacation. 4564 words

Queens Grace COMPLETE WITH SEQUEL - After the New York attack, Odin has taken Loki's magic, made him mortal and imprisoned him. But Asgard is not a safe place for the Trickster under these conditions. Recent events make Odin decide to take away one more thing from his second son, his memory going back for the last four years. This decision and events that lead to it cause Frigga to decide that Asgard is not safe for Loki's reduced station. From stories Thor had told, she decides that Tony Stark's tower would make an excellent secure location for amnesiac Loki to be under house arrest. 225,458 words.

How Desperate are You? COMPLETE WITH SEQUEL – Loki has had a bad year and after leaving Midgard with Thor and challenging Odin isn't making it any better, but no matter how smart you are... Sometimes stubborn happens. It may not seem to be in your best interest, but how desperate are you for a resolution? Any resolution. Ask Tony, maybe he knows. Loki is returned to Asgard and nothing good happens, but Loki isn't the only one with issues, Odin has plenty of his own, especially in the realm of A+ Parenting. Loki is desperate to escape from Asgard, Odin and his past. 73,000 Words

Desperate for Change COMPLETE - Returning to Midgard after an absence of almost two years, Loki finds that as desperate for change as he has been, some changes will take time to get used to, especially when they concern his relationship with Tony and Pepper. Darcy lays down her taser, momentarily and decides to start wielding the internet to the dismay of both the fallen Prince of Asgard and S.H.I.E.L.D. Outing the trickster god to the general public is going to be difficult for Loki, but equally difficult will be Tony's acceptance that things between the three will change, and not always the way he wants them to. Sequel to How Desperate Are You? 77,000 Words

Lessons from Asgard – Courtesy of Loki 2 - The Dark World COMPLETE - A primer for anyone who has ever wondered what the heck is going on in the Eternal City. More humor than spoiler, but if you are a stickler please don't read. Asgard Secrets Exposed.

Art & Story Snippet for The Proper Care and Management of Cat-Gods Bruce takes LoKitty shopping, everything goes well until they leave the mall to go home. Someone.... Has been trying to be funny. LoKitty is NOT amused. Neither is Bruce. 260 words & Picture

How is this my life?

Chapter Summary

Loki reflects on his present situation and what Stark's arrival might mean to him.

Chapter Notes

Starting premise - Loki has been recalled to Asgard after several years of being a prisoner in Stark Tower as a favor to Queen Frigga when Asgard proved to be too dangerous to his now mortal and memory altered self. This leaves Tony minus a lab partner, wingman and buddy to snark with on Movie Night. Loki and Tony started a long distance friends with benefits relationship that takes place on Loki's yearly reward visit to Midgard. Pepper has moved to the west coast and married, SHIELD is doing some crazy shit. With the exception of occasionally seeing Bruce, Tony doesn't have much interaction with his former team mates. He wonders how it is possible to feel so lonely in a city so full of people. He's an engineer, he decides to fix this. - Sequel to Queens Grace. You do not have to have read Queens Grace to follow this.

TRIGGER WARNINGS IN END NOTES PLEASE READ IF YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH CERTAIN SUBJECT MATTER.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 2 – How was this my life?

How was this my life? Loki wondered miserably.

The god's late afternoon headache was already throbbing against his temples, despite not being due for several more hours. Sitting on the bottom step leading up to the throne, Loki's eyes drifted several steps up to the first tier to where he used to stand with Thor and his mother in better days. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say '*in former days*', since even then very few of his days could actually be classed as better exactly. Many had been boring, some had been happy, but quite a few had been teeth grindingly aggravating for one reason or another. Resolutely Loki turned his gaze away.

It had taken twenty minutes of solidly ignoring his mother and Thor before they had left Loki to his thoughts and stepped away to argue amongst themselves. Not that he could imagine what Thor was arguing about. Although if he had to guess, Loki imagined that Thor was incensed over the news that Loki and Stark's former relationship was quite a bit more than friendship. With extra emphasis on former as far as Loki was concerned. Not that Loki particularly worried about what Thor thought; he was more concerned with trying to figure out what Stark's end game was in this insane idea of his. What Loki found all the more worrying, was the fact that Odin would even tolerate the suggestion enough to even begin negotiations. As a rule in general Odin did not like surprises, and in particular he did not much care for the mortals, for all he claimed in the past to be their realm's protector.

Mortal equations aside, alliances such as the one Stark had proposed had taken place on rare occasions, but normally it was not done for anything less than ending a war or major blood feud. It was a solution only considered when the conflict had so decimated the families that absolutely no eligible ranking females were available. In those instances the houses were merged and they paid heavily for an equally ranked shared consort who bore and raised children from each house. The trio raised children eventually becoming the heirs of the opposing house and the heir's children marrying to bring the original bloodline back to the house. Which definitely insured that there would be no more conflicts between the houses if they wanted their bloodline to survive.

The other almost unheard of occurrence was when such an alliance was imposed by a higher power as a punishment because an inter-house conflict had been so bitter that it was decided that the heads of the warring houses were the ones directly responsible for ending it. The major punishment part being that each party was required to produce an heir for the other house of their own body. This normally required the aid of some very powerful Mages. Needless to say very little was heard from either of the warring factions for many centuries after that. The threat of having such an alliance imposed had surely been responsible for ending many a feud before it escalated too far.

Yet Stark was proposing such a joining voluntarily, obviously not knowing how unusual that was in Asgard. Or, Loki thought wryly, more likely not caring.

"Loki darling, why don't you and Thor join me in my garden?" Frigga suggested, heading back over to where he sat, Thor trailing behind her with a chastised expression.

"No thank you mother."

Loki stood, smoothing his plain tunic and adjusting the worn green belt wrapped around his waist. The belt had been dropped and left behind when the clothes of his former life were removed by court order and was the only thing he had to wear that wasn't the faded black or dark grey that non-livery servants wore.

"I think it best if I return to the work site Mother. I wasn't planning on being absent this afternoon so I don't have extra assignment set up to keep the crews busy when they've finished their initial work orders." Besides which, Loki decided that he would be better off working on the BiFrost. If nothing else it would distract him from useless speculation of what might be happening in the All Father's inner chamber. "Besides, I have a full charge on the arc reactor rig and there is no sense wasting it."

Gathering his guards at the door, Loki bade his mother and brother goodbye, deftly ignoring suggestions that they would see him later that evening in the main dining hall. Because if he had any say so in the matter, they wouldn't.

While Loki was constantly refining the runes he used and the power attachment configurations, the crystal still grew too slowly to suit him. Granted it grew many times faster than when he first started, but still much slower than he was happy with. Now if he could have used the Tesseract or the Casket of Ancient Winters as his power source then maybe he would have been able to make some real progress. After all any power source powerful enough to allow Heimdall to mimic the powers of the BiFrost or create an ice age for an entire planet had to be extremely powerful.

However judging by the fit Odin threw the one time he mentioned his research into using either artifact to speed up the repair, neither of them was ever going to be a viable or rather 'allowable' alternative. The only reason he was able to use the arc reactor rig was that he had done so without mentioning it beforehand. Plus since the rig didn't really belong to Loki, but rather one of Frigga's servitors, Odin couldn't declare it forfeit to the crown, much though the elder god wished he could.

And if absolutely none of the computers or programs that Loki used to re-design and manage the BiFrost project were compatible or even readable by the Æsir systems... Well that was just a happy coincidence as far as Loki was concerned and quite frankly suited him to the nth degree. Odin couldn't confiscate Loki's Midgardian computational setup since it also was listed as belonging to Queen Frigga's Midgardian servitor, Stark. Granted using the more primitive earth computers took longer, since he had to manually transfer all the information he needed from the Æsir system into his frankly outdated Midgardian tech, but Loki considered it well worth the extra time. The Earther programs Loki had to use were a more cumbersome than their Æsir equivalents would have been, but in the end it was all well worth it to keep his solutions private.

Still, as Loki sat there at his portable desk, going over task lists, design approvals and his workflow tables, he couldn't help but think that even without the Tesseract, how much easier this would be to do if he could bring his damn laptop to the job site. But apparently that would be one change too many and beside Odin most likely didn't want the word to get out that none of the design work was being done and saved to Asgard's giant data banks. No matter how much it upset Odin.

After taking a moment to bask in the satisfaction of that thought, Loki took a deep settling breath before he returned to the job at hand. Much to the chagrin of the dwarfs and the Æsir construction crews, he was not allowing them to build in a linear fashion. The old way of 'When this is done, we start that' was inefficient. During what would have otherwise been down time between building supports, rather than wasting time standing around admiring their work and boasting about it, Loki had them instead building sections of the transfer room. By the time the bridge was long enough to build that final support the god wanted the transfer room complete, its sections ready for final assemble. Yes there would have to be some last minute adjustments to the structure, but it would still be quicker to prebuild it.

Even if he could have used a bit of downtime himself.

Listening intently as he made notes on his drawings and lists, Loki became aware of a slight burr in the tone of the growing crystal. Beckoning for the young Æsir construction runner who was waiting by one of his guards, he handed off a list of approved tasks. Rising slowly, so as not to exacerbate his headache, Loki went and painstakingly tuned the crystal array until the tones were again pure.

The overall harmony of the bridge was something the other mages had inexplicably not factored into their construction considerations at all. For reason Loki was frankly at a loss to explain. Before they were even allowed passed the first pair of supports, Asgard's horses had to be trained to ignore the glissando their hoofs caused when they ran upon it. The damn bridge sang such eerily pure notes when walked upon that it had frequently caused the hair on the back of Loki's neck to stand out. He knows he couldn't have been the only one who experienced that phenomenon. Loki had always privately felt that a large part of the exhilaration experienced from traveling via the Bi-Frost was partially due to the almost over-whelming sensation of traversing the bridge's crystal structure itself. It was an exciting sensation... In every sense of the word. Loki remembered from his youngling days when he, Thor and the other pages had made it a habit to take a willing maiden with then when running out to Heimdall to pick up or deliver a parcel. Deliveries of course being much more fun since you were free to take advantage of the resulting sensations as soon as you returned from the bridge.

Shaking his head ruefully at the memory, Loki immediately regretted it. Pain blossomed behind his eyes at the abrupt movement. Trying to ignore the hot painful melting feeling inside his skull, Loki wrenched his thoughts back to the clear, almost soothing notes the crystal made as it grew. His first real breakthrough on understanding the BiFrost had been the realization that if the crystal was not in absolute harmony it would grow so slowly it took several weeks for the growth to be

measurable. Not that Loki was happy with the inch or so of length per day he managed to generate now. But it had been so much worse when he started. When he first started the rate of growth was so slow he'd calculated that it could possibly take hundreds of years to finish. He frankly thanked the Norns that he had the ability to hear discern the off pitch notes, because without it he would have had to depend on someone else's perceptions and diligence and might never have been able to get the Muspelheim be-damned thing re-built.

Perhaps this was the one good thing about his puzzling attack on New York. If it hadn't been for the carrying case they had built to move the Tesseract it would have taken much longer to develop a mechanism to recharge the mini arc reactor he was using to power the crystal's growth. Of course Stark and his lab's capabilities had been a big help there. Without Stark, he wouldn't have even have had access to the Tesseract case's plans, let alone the means to adapt it as a charging station.

The corners of Loki's mouth turned down. He was not going to think about Midgard right now. His daily headache was already in full bloom, he didn't need chest pains to go with it. And he would not start to hyperventilate out here at the work site again. Once was enough.

Loki despised this mortal body he was forced to wear. His strength was gone, his body's ability to heal itself was gone and he now had fight or flight responses that were ridiculously overblown and almost impossible to keep in check. He really didn't know how mortals coped with it all, the tiredness, the pain, and the Norms be damned over stimulation and mood swings that just made him want to scream. The only thing that stopped him from daily panic attacks was his mother's assurance that he wasn't getting older and wouldn't be aged and feeble by the time his sentence was up. It would have saved him no end of stress if he had known that fact while on Midgard.

While Frigga had begged for him to be allowed to keep his longevity, Loki now knew that no matter how heinous his unknown crime was, the council would have kept him alive at least until the BiFrost repair was complete. Although he had no doubt that their preferred method would have been a servitor mark such as Stark's. A mark he would have had to hope would be annually recharged, doubtless with several occasions of having to bargain future services to the Asgard Throne in exchange for optimal renewal.

Loki rubbed his forehead wearily. He might not have to worry about his life depending on a servitors mark, but in the meantime he had these damn headaches to deal with. Since he didn't want Asgard, by way of the healer's hall, to know how truly helpless and mortal he was, he couldn't get as much pain reliever as he would have liked, so he limited himself to one draught of medicine a day. He found if he took it right before bed, the sheer relief of having the pounding finally go away would normally make him drop off to sleep immediately.

Of course that might not work this evening. Stark was in Asgard. How was that even possible? Stark was in Asgard bidding on him. The very idea made his chest pound painfully.

As if daily headaches weren't bad enough, he thought sourly.

Stark was closeted with the All Father. Bidding on him. Bidding for Loki against other houses. Bidding like he was some sort of prize winning horse that would make a welcome addition to his stable.

He had already endured several years of whispering by the court over Odin trying to fob him off to several noble families who were willing to pay his maintenance while pledging to keep him in check. That however would be nothing compared to the uproar in the court if they ever found out the All Father was even entertaining the idea of joining him another male and a Midgardian one at that.

Placing three fingers on either side of his face, Loki applied steady pressure to his temples for about ten seconds; he then spent several minutes rubbing in a circular motion in an attempt to reduce the throbbing of his headache. Even though he knew the pain relief was only temporary and would return the minute he stopped massaging, it was a welcome respite none the less.

OoooO

Loki had been so busy reviewing tomorrow's schedule that he wasn't even aware that Tony was there until the man lightly touched his arm.

Loki had ordered Thor to come and get him immediately when Tony and Odin were finished, but it was several hours later when Tony by himself showed up, Loki made a mental note to add Thor's disregard of his request to the list of things he was going to punish his elder brother for when the opportunity presented itself.

"Honestly Stark," Loki spat at him, startled that the guards had allowed him so close and annoyed he hadn't even noticed his approach. He brushed Tony's hand off his arm and hissed in a low undertone while angrily brushing back an errant strand of hair behind his ear, "This whole situation is ludicrous. I'm already the laughing stock of Asgard without your insane offer."

Tony's lips thinned as his eyes followed the godling's movement, noting the slight tremor of Loki's hand before it pressed hard against the desk top, the god's own green flashed angrily daring him to mention it.

"This idea has nothing to do with a full of himself rap star," Tony told him. Shrugging when the cultural reference went right over the god's head Tony continued, "Ya know what. Just ignore that last one, stupid joke."

"No this whole idea is a stupid joke!"

"No, it's not. You're worried about being the laughing stock of a planet that you don't even want to stay on, a planet that keeps you a shackled prisoner." Tony shrugged and mugged a theatrically eye roll. "Okay maybe not real physical shackles right at this minute, but tomorrow they could be. A place that has shackled your powers and your freedom of movement probably enough to make you desperate to get them back anyway you can."

Loki looked down, refusing to look at Stark. Instead he studied the papers in front of him. He was mad for several reasons, the main one of course being the fact that Tony had totally embarrassed him and betrayed his trust during his last visit. Even if no one but themselves knew about it, he still writhed in shame whenever he thought about how much he had wanted to be with Stark and how devastated he was when the mortal had simply forgotten about him. Overlooked and forgotten would have been bad enough if Stark had been Asgardian, but as a mortal, one that he had given his trust to? Completely humiliating.

And this was on top of all the other real problems Loki has to contend with. The Bi-Frost crystal was finally growing at a visually measurable rate, however there is no guarantee that it was the exact structural and molecular match of the previous crystal. Some of Midgard's tech, would that he could use it, might help if he could access it, but he can't. Asgard's tech was all developed after the bridge so asking to use it to double check his work would most likely be viewed with deep distrust as to what he was really planning on doing with such technology. So all Loki could do without raising more suspicion than would be healthy was to hope for the best and spend sleepless nights worrying about material failure or the crystal resonating at the wrong pitch.

Can you tune a bridge?

Bridge tuning, yet another problem he has to deal with. Loki isn't sure if it's possible and spending those sleepless nights searching the library and archives have not even hinted at an answer.

The god also hated having the huge gap in his memory and being punished for something he couldn't even remember. It didn't help of course that he only had the indirect hints that he was being punished for crimes so heinous that he wasn't safe from reprisal on either realm. It was intolerable that he was alternately laughed at due to his reduced state and had to be protected from others for the same reason. And Stark's actions were not helping in the least.

In years past he would have just retreated to the library or gone on a long journey. But now he was on display every day at the bridge site. The guards, his and Odin's had often had to fend off hecklers and several times those who wanted to bandy something much sharper than words. And now everyone watching him today was going to wonder just who Stark was and why he was even talking to Loki.

And why was Stark here plaguing him with his stupid idea? Didn't he realise that Loki had enough to worry about? Stark who couldn't even with Jarvis' help, remember that Loki was scheduled to arrive for a once a year, twelve hour visit. The one highlight of his entire year and the man couldn't care to remember or even be bothered to send him a message telling him he was no longer interested.

Bile rose in his throat.

Stark was here with his senseless idea that was only possible because Thor had survived to adulthood making him superfluous. After all he was a now useless second prince, a seiðr wielding egri. And if this agreement... no... if this sale came to pass, there would be no question that the Midgardian would not be the one shape shifting to play the female.

Privately, Loki knew he couldn't even claim not to be occasionally attracted to men in general, and Stark in particular. While he was not the only Æsir who had occasionally indulged in activities that Asgard did not generally talk about, this particular behavior certainly wasn't admitted to by anyone who wanted to retain their social standing. Especially not those who already were under close scrutiny for being a seiðmenn. Something that Stark with his Midgardian '*do your own thing*' mindset simply did not understand and just the thought of trying to explain it to the irritating mortal made him wince.

Sick from the near constant throbbing in his temples, Loki stared unseeingly down at the papers in front of him. He hadn't even made it back from the throne room when he'd had to detour to retch until there was nothing left in his stomach but sour bile. That was never a good sign; it usually meant that by nightfall he would experience black spots in front of his eyes that sometimes got so bad that he couldn't see where he was going.

"Look, I know how desperate you are to get your powers back." Tony said not daring to touch him again but using an urgent tone of voice to reclaim his fractured attention. "You're so desperate that I'm afraid that one of these days you are going to make a deal that ends up killing you inside."

Loki would have liked to have lashed out and smacked the feigned look of concern right off of Stark's face, but instead his brows lowered even more and he contented himself with shooting the irritating little mortal the most baleful look he could currently manage.

At one point in time, such a look from Loki would have silenced beings far more powerful than Stark. Now however in his reduced state it barely caused the wretched man to pause his babbling for a moment.

Of course Stark never had been known to take a hint any more subtle than a plasma blast.

“I can’t do anything about the fact that even once you are finished with this you will still be on probation, bound to whatever tasks Odin assigns you. The One-eyed bastard isn’t budging on that one, but I sure as hell can help you get the blocks on your magic removed so things will be a bit easier and safer for you,” Tony said earnestly.

“Oh I’m sure,” Loki jeered allowing his lip to curl in scorn finally turning in his chair to look at Stark full on. “Because the All Father is just going to give me back my powers just because you ask him to.” Sarcasm dripped from every syllable.

Tony snorted, making a face to clearly show how little he thought of Odin’s forbearance and generosity. “Hell no, he’s going to do it because I am going to pay him for the use of them.”

“Like Odin needs your pitiful amount of wealth,” Loki scoffed ignoring the blossom of pain in his chest and faint sourness in his mouth while he maintained a sceptical facade. “Please Stark, isn’t that’s a bit egotistical even for you?”

Stark’s expression had a note of worry for some reason. Not exactly a look Loki was used to seeing on him.

“Well, not entirely,” Stark leaned in a bit, peering closely at Loki. “Although I do think it gets on his last nerve that your mom is keeping you funded, and making Asgard pay for your guards. Odin is going to give your magic back to you because I told him I wanted you to have them for the benefit of Stark International and in return I am not only going to pay all your expenses, I am also going to restore your estates, and am pledging a fucking enormously large, and this is even by my standards, surety that I won’t let you disappear while your sentence is incomplete.”

“What?” Loki, turned wide eyes to Stark, stunned. Not so much that Odin would sell his services like a... But that he would demand or even allow his estates to be restored, but then a thought struck him. Of course he would allow it. After all restored estates can be subject to future confiscation, giving Odin. Of course, he thought cynically, Odin couldn’t remove them again in the future if unless they were returned to him in the first place.

“Well I think barefoot and pregnant is what Odin really wants,” Stark continued blithely, “but he is just going to have to settle for close at hand, busy and not invading anything.”

Loki grimaced, his eyelids fluttering shut as a sharp stabbing pains raced across his forehead. While he was certain the All Father hadn’t said it quite the way Stark did, past experience made him painfully aware how imaginative and vindictive his father the king could be when upset.

A hissing noise like that of an angry tea kettle prompted him to lift one eye to half-mast. The unwelcome sight of Stark’s face contorted in anger did not tempt him to open it any further

After a long moment studying his face Stark spat, “Christ Almighty Loki, how fucking high is your blood pressure right now? Are you still having panic attacks? What are they giving you for them?” Stark wasn’t shouting, but his voice did pick up enough volume and punch that Loki couldn’t help wincing a little. Or notice the uneasy shifting of one of his guards. “Fuck it all Bambi you look like hell, you’re nothing but skin and bones again, how do you put up with all this shit?”

“Because I have no choice Stark, it’s this or die.” Loki hissed, rubbing his temples refusing to look at the mortal even though he could see shoes never made in Asgard stop in front of him and feel the touch of fingers lightly brushing upon his arm. “Until I’ve finished my sentence or am ready to die, this is my life. Is there something about this you don’t understand, I wouldn’t think it would be

that difficult for someone who is supposed to be a genius.”

Callused fingers gripped Loki’s chin hard, lifting his face until he couldn’t help but lock onto the cognac brown eyes that appeared to be trying hard to see into his mind.

“You know what I understand? Most mortal bodies handle normal stress loads just fine. But Bambi, this place is another level of crap entirely.” Stark’s other hand brushed a few strands of hair behind his ear, trailing along after it until his palm was resting on Loki’s shoulder. “Shit buddy. You’re dealing with memory loss, a major public works construction project that would take a fricken team of structural engineers to schedule and oversee, re-discovering a scientific process that no one has used in a millennia or more and have a prison sentence hanging over your head in a place that already doesn’t like you because you aren’t a sword wielding maniac. And you have to be guarded twenty-four seven to prevent said maniacs from beating the crap out of you. That is a fuckload of stress babe, Hell it’s a wonder you haven’t already had a stroke.”

Loki’s eyes flew open.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. May thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Beta'd by the most wonderful **Mima Mia**

TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS

This chapter will *contain or mention* - Arranged marriage, Forced compatibility. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Most of it will not be graphic but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please **DO NOT READ** if you will have issues with any of these items.

Eir is not amused.

Chapter Summary

Illicit drug use in Asgard? Eir and Tony are shocked. Shocked I say.

Chapter Notes

I do recommend that you subscribe if you want to be able to find this d*mn thing. I post it and find that the posting date attached is several days ago. I try to change it back it doesn't take. So... If you check the feed, you may miss it, or think it is an old chapter you've already read. Why this is happening I don't know, but this is not the first time. The help desk says they are working on it.

So again... if you want to make sure you don't miss an up date, I do recommend that you subscribe. *sigh*

Many thanks to all who commented, bookmarked and Fav'd. You totally rock.

TRIGGER WARNINGS IN END NOTES PLEASE READ IF YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROMBLEM WITH CERTAIN SUBJECT MATTER.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 3 – Eir is not amused.

Oh real smart move there Stark.

Tony wanted to smack himself. At the mention of a stroke, a mortal ailment he knew Loki was aware of, the god's already angry pale face drained even more, his eyes going all wild and shock-y looking.

Mentally kicking himself, Tony let go of Loki's chin shifting his grip to the god's forearms as he tried to sooth the god. "No, it's okay. We can fix this," he said, trying to sound both reassuring and upbeat. He had totally forgotten the god's irrational, anxiety towards any kind of illness or injury to his now weak mortal body.

"Don't worry, it will be fine; mortals know how to take care of this stuff." Tony said sliding fingers further down the stricken god's arms until they twined with Loki's. Squeezing the godling's hands he tried to talk Flawed Design back to the land of normal people. At least so far as normal referred to a reduced god getting ready to Z-out on him while he stood on an alien planet without enough wi-fi capacity for Jarvis to advise him.

Jarvis or no Jarvis, Tony was not panicking.

He did however wonder fleetingly what the fuck was taking Pepper so long. Surely she was not still closeted with his royal windbag's clerks dotting i's and crossing t's?

Mentally shaking himself, Tony decided to try a '*matter of fact*' approach.

Keeping his tone conversational Tony gave Loki's hand a little squeeze, "Look, I'm going to insist that Odin send you down for Bruce to look at and my doctor too. Hell yeah, we'll do a consult."

Loki took a long, shuddering breath. Okay, breathing is good. Tony smiled down at him, but his relief was short lived as the next breath was equally long and shuddering.

Okay. Not good.

"You, Larry Daley." Tony called out to one of the waiting guards. "Come here. You're one of Frigga's guards right?" He figured this was a pretty safe bet, since this guys outfit was quite a bit different than most of the other guards he had seen. While all of the guards looked like they could easily rip out Tony's spine and use it as a musical instrument, these guys had more practical looking outfits than the guards he had seen in the palace.

Not plainer by any means, their stuff was equally detailed and finely done, but perhaps less symbolic looking. Which Tony guessed made sense; they weren't here to proclaim King Odin's might or the glory of Asgard or anything. They were here for one reason only and that was to protect Frigga's little mischief maker.

The guard hurried over, his hand clenched around the hilt of his sword. His look both haughty and antagonistic.

"I report directly to the Queen, my name is Aldfrig." He introduced himself with a hostile voice, narrowing his eyes and giving Tony another hard look as if to say that regardless of what type of 'Letter of Introduction', hastily scrawled by Prince Thor, Tony was currently on thin ice as far as he was concerned. "Who exactly are you and why are you bothering Prince Loki?"

Loki grimaced waving a hand weakly, trying to catch his breath enough to speak.

"Hush, you." Tony admonished him gently. "I got this; you just work on the whole breathing thing."

Tony turned back to the guard, pasting a superior sneer on his face. Not unlike the look he used when testifying before a hostile congress.

"Who am I? I'm Tony Stark, Iron Man, hero of Midgard, problem solver for Queen Frigga, close friend of Thor and Loki. If you haven't been living under a rock you may have heard of me." At the way the guards eyes shifted uneasily, Tony was pretty sure he had just scored a home run recognition wise, so he decided to push his luck while things were still going his way.

"I'm also the guy who's going to be dictating the quality of your living quarters for the next several years."

That statement got him a flinch.

"But right now I am the guy who wants you to help him shut this place down for the day, because the Prince has been summoned by his mother. You think you can do that? Or do I need to talk to your buddy over there?"

Apparently he didn't because after a short whispered conversation with Aldfrig, the second guard went to inform the construction supervisor that Prince Loki was leaving for the day and his work area needed to be stored for the evening. Aldfrig then helped Tony unhook the arc reactor from the crystal arrays and repack everything into the suitcase. Loki's curled lip and angry glare promised

dire retribution for all of them...

As soon as the Trickster could properly catch his breath.

“Exactly what do you think you’re doing Stark.” Loki snapped at him, trying unsuccessfully to keep his upper arm out of Tony’s grip.

“Getting you back to the palace in time to get ready for dinner like your mom told me to, after all we can’t disobey the queen.”

“I assure you that I have quite frequently disobeyed the queen.” Loki growled in a breathy undertone.

“Yeah, and you’re not five anymore, so maybe it’s time you stopped.” Tony retorted, steering him after the point guard, taking advantage of Loki’s lack of concentration on anything other than arguing with him to get the god moving in the right direction.

He hoped.

Fuck, he was just following the guy with the sword, who presumably knew where they were going.

OoooO

Thor had met them on their way back and seeing Loki’s pallor, he quickly relieved Tony of the suitcase, saying that he would take it to be recharged by Heimdall and then see it safely stored. Loki surfaced momentarily from his own world to scowl when the Thunderer solicitously asked Tony if the younger god was doing okay.

“I’m right here Thor,” The younger god huffed, partially in aggravation, partially due to shortness of breath.

“Indeed. Should I summon a transport? You don’t look well.”

“I’m not an invalid Thor,” Loki growled teeth snapping shut on all the other things he would have liked to say.

“Of course you aren’t brother.” Thor said in far too loud and hardy to be the least bit soothing. Even if, judging by his expression that was the tone the large blonde had been trying for.

Shouldering past his brother, fists clenched in irritation, Loki only made it a few more steps before his point guard held out a hand to stop them. Obviously aware of the drill, Loki stood rigidly, almost vibrating with irritation. Tony looked back to see that they were waiting for that Al-guy, who was listening intently as Thor whispered to him.

Whispered ‘a la Thor’ that is, which meant that the rest of the party, Tony included, could hear every word as Thor briefly instructed Frigga’s head guard, with what basically amounted to the fact that Tony was authorized by Frigga to be with Loki. That Frigga would soon have a meeting with them to explain everything and until then, they were to look upon Tony’s orders with the same level of compliance they did Thor’s.

Glancing around, Tony could see that none of the guards looked thrilled at the news that they would be taking orders from a lowly Midgardian. However, he had to hand it to the guys; they were very professional about Tony’s change in status. And quickly became that much more helpful in getting their little party to Loki’s room using the quickest route. An act that seemingly required

no consultation between them and left Tony wondering furiously how often this sort of speed was required.

Ostensibly they were returning to Loki's chambers so Frigga's boy could get cleaned and dressed for his audience with the Queen Mum. But really, Tony just thought he needed to set the god down somewhere quiet so he could either calm down or lose his shit in private.

Rolling a cautious eye toward the hyperventilating, yet still seething Mischief Maker, Tony figured he was in for one hell of a scream fest once the Rudolf got his breathing back under control.

Loki had only uttered a bitter word or two of protest when Tony took him by the forearm and began towing him back to the palace. The younger god didn't even offer any direction or guidance once they reached the palace proper. He just walked slowly, occasionally stopping, breathing deeply, looking for all the world like he was having trouble getting enough air to exist, let alone walk.

Fortunately they had already entered the palace proper when Loki detoured a few steps and dropped with much less than his usual grace on a low wall. "Wait..." he wheezed, wrapping his arms across his belly and dropping his head down towards his knees, "A moment."

"Sure thing Rudolf. You keep Al here company a minute, he looks winded."

Cloudy, pain filled green eyes rolled up to look at him for the briefest of moments.

Furious inside, but keeping his expression blank, Tony gestured for Aldfrig to go stand by Loki and walked part way back down the hallway with the other guard who had followed at his motioned request. "Can you find a servant and send them to get a doctor or something?" Tony asked, keeping his voice low and getting a blank look in return. "Nurse practitioner? Umm, can't remember the Asgard word... A little help here would be appreciated. Someone who takes care of people when they are sick or injured?"

"Healer?" The guard guessed.

"Yeah. Healer. I want a healer. Can you get one to make a house call without the whole palace knowing about it?" Tony frowned. "Or a chamber call I guess. Do they even do those here?"

"Of course my lord."

"Wonderful, they need to tell the healer that Tony Stark, Queen Frigga's guest has a slight problem and needs to see them immediately. Quicker than that even. Just don't mention the Prince at all. Okay?"

"Of course my lord, it will only take a moment," said the guard, slipping back the way they had come and quickly turning a corner.

Tony went back over and sat on the wall beside Loki and twined their fingers together, his thumb rubbing soft circles. No snide remarks or cutting looks were tossed his way even when Tony dared to brushed damp hair away from Loki's sweating, but oddly cool forehead. Tony attributed that small bit of grace to how bad his god must be feeling.

By the time the second guard had returned, Loki indicated that he was ready to continue and Tony had formulated a million questions that it was killing him not to ask.

OoooO

Loki's chambers didn't look anything like Tony had thought they would. The initial chamber they swept through was fairly large but as Thor had mentioned, it had been pretty much stripped bare. It still had some of the trappings of the grand room it had once been, such as the long rich looking cream colored drapes with gold and green trim, a fireplace that would put any other palace fireplace Tony had ever seen to shame and of course Viking Celtic looking stone work fricken everywhere. However what it did not have in it, was anything else besides a fuck-ton of empty built-in book shelves and one plain looking chair sitting just inside the door. Not a rug, not a table, nothing.

The bedroom was more what he was expecting, green canopy bed and books everywhere. A small tapestry-looking green and gold couch, side tables and matching chairs made up a small grouping that was angled to either allow a view of the balcony or the fireplace. Both of which, the fire place and balcony, were enormous and done with more of that finely wrought stonework he'd been seeing since he got here. Tony guided Loki over to the couch, pressing him down onto it.

Why Tony had imagined that Loki would have an Earthgardian-like apartment with an attached kitchen he had no clue. But it was okay since Al was pretty quickly tapping on some ear bling he was wearing and telling a fourth guard from who knows where, to get Tony a pitcher of security certified safe ice water for Loki to drink while they waited for the healer.

"Everyone out," Loki had panted, accepting the glass of water, but waving a slightly shaking hand dismissively.

Tony raised a brow as two of the guards finished their security check and nodding at Aldfrig passed through the main chamber and out into the hallway.

"I will bring the healer as soon as they arrive my lord," Aldfrig told Tony leaving the bedroom and pulling the big double doors shut behind him.

In truth Tony was kind of sorry to see him go, figuring the screaming was going to start soon. Turning back towards the seating group, he found Loki laying back on the couch holding a trembling tumbler of water to his temple.

Walking over to the couch Tony crouched down in front of the gracelessly slumping former god.

Green eyes flicked open a moment before a low cold voice told him, "I'm going to kill you for this."

"That is not news Rudolf," Tony told him wryly, wincing in sympathy when Loki's face scrunched up in pain. Spying a napkin on the water jug tray, Tony went over and stuffed it into the other tumbler and poured ice water on it. Squeezing the excess off onto the tray so it wouldn't drip so much, Tony folded the napkin into a rectangular pad. Walking around the couch, he held the cool damp cloth to Loki's forehead while his other hand gently stroked silky black hair out of the way.

OoooO

As Queen Frigga's guest, Tony didn't get just any Doc.

Hell no.

He got the Asgardian Dean of Medicine, who turned out to be Eir, that scary old broad who had treated Loki all those years ago when he first showed up injured in Stark Tower and later when he'd been so depressed. She had no sooner arrived and made a quick check of her patient before she and Tony had gone a quick few rounds. He was majorly pissed when he found out that no one

had been treating or even checking his god for stress related illnesses since he had returned to Asgard. So far as Eir knew, Loki had only been having the occasional headache.

Fucking hand waving posers all of them.

“It’s not like you didn’t fucking know that he was prone to this shit.” Tony hissed, following her into the attached bath.

Which meant the good Doctor was already more than a little pissed when she when reached into a linen closet to get some hand towels for a better cold compress and she noticed a huge jug of a pain elixir that Loki had ‘somehow’ acquired as a headache remedy. Apparently it was the same medicine that they had given him a small flask of when he first returned. And so far as the Healer Hall knew, Loki had only asked for another flask on two or three occasions after that.

A further hasty search of the cupboard uncovered a small box with broken bits of two similar jugs on a bottom shelf, tucked in the back and covered with an bath mat of some sort. How Loki had managed to liberated three of the two gallon plus jugs from the central storage room, she had no idea.

Nor was he telling.

“Loki,” Eir hissed, pushing past Tony carrying the almost empty jug out to the main chamber, “How did you get this? How long have you been having headaches?” She peered at the date on the label noting that it was a recent batch and then glared at him appalled. “How many of these jugs have you taken? How often are you taking this?”

Eir was seriously not happy.

Sitting beside Loki on the couch, Tony felt him stiffen defensively, but the god looked away still sucking in air in deep artificially slow breaths, refusing to answer.

Tony sighed.

Snaking his arm behind him, Tony took in the dark shadows under Loki’s eyes that stood out in harsh contrast against his too pale skin. Loki, if anything, looked even more stressed than he had on the trip back to his room and way worse than he did when while yelling at Odin in the throne room.

The whole arm thing most likely would have jump started their fight, if it hadn’t been for Eir pelting the god with questions while poking, prodding and waving fairy wands and crystals all over the place. Every time Loki even looked like he was going to open his mouth to start yelling the old broad stuck an instrument or a pill in it.

Loki’s face, or at least what Tony could see of it, was stiff and closed and his lips pressed tight. Tony leaned in and whispered in what he hoped was a low enough voice to be private, “Look, buddy. Before this is finished, I’m going to have them explain what happened and maybe even take that fucking rune off you.” Loki didn’t move, but he did show evidence of some interest, looking at Tony from the corner of his eye rather than staring out the window.

“That’s part of my demand; I don’t want them to leave you in total ignorance anymore, I think the whole ‘not knowing thing’ is at least part of your stress problems,” The inventor continued even lower, his mouth right at Loki’s ear.

On the other side of Loki, Eir who was checking the reading on some weird crystal egg thing, snorted, so obviously whispering was *‘not’* something you could do around Asgardians. Tony

shrugged mentally, deciding to just roll with it.

“See, scary lady doc agrees with me.”

Loki stared at the floor a moment and then looked back towards the window, his lips compressed into an impossibly thin line indicating that he was absolutely not taking notice of Tony or anything words he might say.

Patting the god’s knee, Tony stood. “Be right back.” He headed into the bathroom motioning discretely for Eir to follow him.

OoooO

It seemed Eir also had some communication ear bling, which may explain how she showed up so fast.

Leaving her to contact one of her assistants about his request and he suspected continue her search of the bathing room to see if there was other evidence of what the Mischief Maker had been up to, Tony went back into the bedroom and sat beside Loki, he reached over and curled his fingers around the lightly clenched fist Loki had lying on his knee.

Glancing sideways, he could see that whatever Eir had given Loki to calm him down seemed to have taken at least the edge off. His features were still slightly pinched with pain from his acknowledged headache, but his pulse was no longer rapidly fluttering under his jaw and he was not hauling in such deep breaths in an effort to get enough oxygen to hide the fact that what his body really wanted to do was keep hyperventilating.

“I fucked up,” Tony stated quietly, not looking directly at Loki, but rather using his peripheral vision to watch the god’s frown deepen. “I was stupid and forgetful and it hurt you and I have regretted it every single day of the last year. But maybe in a way it was good... Loki stiffened beside him, hand twitching as if he was going to pull it away. Tony insinuated two fingers into Loki’s curled up hand, squeezing it slightly. “I said maybe, because it made me realize how important you were to me and how badly I missed having you as a friend and lover.”

“It obviously wasn’t that important to you Stark,” Loki pained and soured expression was completely aligned with his scornful, defensive tone. “But then I never thought that it really was.”

Even after all his years of experience, it was still hard for Tony to acknowledge that deep down, he was a shit. But in this case not only did he have to face that fact; he needed to let his god ‘see’ that he was facing it if he wanted any kind of a chance with him. Unlike Pepper, Loki did not automatically give him the benefit of the doubt, nor did he cut him any slack for old times’ sake.

“Loki, except for Pepper, you should know better than most how much I take the wrong things for granted. It seems the more I care about people, the worse I treat them sometimes. And if I honestly never got it across to you how much I care about you and how much I value your friendship and affection, then I guess I suck at this emotional crap worse than I thought I did.” He lightly rocked their joined hands while Loki worried his bottom lip, still not directly looking at Tony. Which the engineer guessed was fair. I wasn’t like he was looking at Loki directly either, the both of them apparently relying on sidelong glances. Tony snorted, “Which I honestly didn’t think was possible.”

“I want to make it right. This last year of not knowing how you were doing drove me crazy.” An unconvinced Loki turned towards him, but before he could say anything there was a knock on the double doors leading into the living room.

Loki sighed. "Enter."

"Prince Loki, there is a healer here to see Lady Eir, she is requesting admission."

"Only into the outer chambers," Loki instructed him.

Having a good idea of why the healer assistant was out there, Tony slid off the couch, just as Eir poked her head out of the bathroom, the box of jug shards in her hands.

"Bring that," she said to Tony with a lift of her chin towards the almost empty jug on the side table.

Loki watched them leave the room, brows furled slightly in confusion as to why Eir was ordering around a mortal. And why Tony Stark of all mortals was allowing her to do so.

He found out a short while later when Tony reappeared without Eir, but instead ushering in Pepper who brought a copy of the Alliance Agreement for them to both look over.

That was pretty much when, as Thor would say, the Bildgesnipe hit the picket line.

OoooO

"You bastard!" The godling screamed jumping up from the couch, the papers crumpled in his fist where a moment earlier he had been merely making tch-ing noises and occasionally snorting in disgust.

Not that those were necessarily the noises Tony had expected to hear if ever he proposed to someone. Granted they weren't shrill shrieks of joy or something else that would cause his ears to start bleeding. And he was grateful for that, however....

"Let me guess," Pepper said, her head leaning on the two fingers that were massaging her temples and looking up at the enraged god through her bangs. "Clause fifteen?"

Loki spun on her like the personification of fury, "Yessssss," He hissed, putting way too many s's in the word. Pepper held up her hand.

"That was all Odin. It was a last minute thing; Tony wasn't even there when he barged in and added it."

"Added what?" Tony asked, hurried flipping through the papers he had been ignoring. He was there when they made the deal, he didn't think he needed to look through them again, but obviously he was wrong.

"Oh." He said in a small voice, perching on the edge of the couch, a blush rising up his neck as he kept his eyes on the paper, not daring to take his eyes off the paper.

"Oh?" Loki spat shaking the crumpled contract in front of him.

"Oh!?' That's all you have to say?" His other hand shot out and grabbed Tony's bangs yanking his head back so he was forced to meet the god's flashing eyes.

"OH?!" Loki shrieked, his voice hitting octaves that Tony hadn't known a male voice could reach right before he slammed Tony's head hard with the palm of his hand.

Of course the fact that Loki could reach those octaves might have been part of the reason for Odin to stick in clause fifteen.

But perhaps it was best not to express that thought.

Flowing up on to Tony in a way that Tony did know he could, Loki pinned him against the backrest of the couch, the rolled up and crumpled contract shoved painfully under his chin as Loki began screaming at the top of his lungs in Elvish, or old Æsir or fucking Swahili for all Tony knew.

Pepper leapt to her feet.

Tony waved a hand frantically and shot her a 'just don't' look. He was worried that she would surprise the god if she reached for him and get struck in an adrenalin fueled accident. So long as Loki was only screaming, he figured he should let him vent a little. Lord knew the guy could use it. Lord knows Tony deserved it.

Pepper, due no doubt to their many years of subliminal communication, not only knew to back off right away, but she even hurried over when he heard the door open to make sure the guard didn't come in and escalate the situation. Confident that she would handle the guard, Tony turned his attention back to the screaming maniac on top of him.

Slowly, so as not to startle the screaming god, Tony drifted his hands up the sides of Loki's legs to his waist and then allowed them to settle lightly against the small of the gods back. Loki didn't so much as flinch when Tony started rubbing what he hoped were soothing circles on either side of the god's spine. There was something so sexy about a snarling Loki that Tony made a mental note to dust out his kink closet, because surely he should not have to wrestle against getting a boner while being screamed at so loud that masonry on the ceiling vault was in danger of being shaken loose.

But it was. The cloudy, dull jade eyes were now bright green with anger and Loki's thin pale cheeks were flushed an attractive pink, the only problem as Tony saw it, was that the man crouched over him, wouldn't shut up and kiss him.

Okay, so the jabbing him under the jaw with the contract was a bit annoying, so that was a second problem. And maybe the fact that he was no doubt missing out on some really imaginative cussing, but honestly that was all. He decided to at least address the last problem when Loki paused after an amazingly long string of vindictiveness to take a deep breath.

"Buddy, I understand you're upset, but if you could just swear in English so I could understand you, that would be a big help."

For a moment, a tiny one, so small an instant that it was hardly worth noting, the god paused. Jerking upright as if stuck with a pin, Loki looked at him amazed and then the Norse god of Righteous Indignation let loose another torrent of screaming, thankfully mostly in English this time.

You had to give it to him, Tony thought admiringly. The guy could swear up a storm.

A storm that Tony was content to ride out. His eyes roamed over Loki's face, taking in every change he could find, the slightly pinched look around his nose from losing weight again, committing to memory the way his god's silky black hair always seemed to escape from behind his ears, drifting down in odd tendrils that caressed his sharp cheekbones... Noticing how complete he felt to be this close, with his hands on caressing Loki's back.

So yeah, there was some pretty vile stuff being spouted, and frankly Tony was being referred to in a manner that would have made his childhood house keeper look to the heavens for assistance. But

for the most part none of it was exactly wrong, and amazingly enough, while imaginative it wasn't as personal as Tony had expected it to be.

When the god had finally got all the 'insensitive oaf', 'unappreciative moron' along with other well deserved stuff spewed out in English, he then circled around to the match that had lit this little tinder blast. That being clause fifteen. Tony gave him his best puppy dog eyes, the ones he had cribbed off of Cap'n Spangles when he was disappointed with Tony.

Hey, what do ya know, they worked.

Loki wound down, stopped shouting and just glared at Tony.

"I didn't know about it Lo. I definitely wouldn't have asked for it, I understand how it would upset you, hell it would upset anyone to have this sprung on them." Ignoring the suddenly narrowing eyes Tony pushed on soothingly. "I'll go with you to your mother to see if maybe we can all get together and convince Odin to change it."

Which was apparently exactly the wrong thing to say.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. May thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Beta'd by the most wonderful Mima Mia

**TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS
TRIGGER WARNINGS**

This chapter will *contain or mention* - Self medication with stolen drugs by a depressed person if this is a problem for you please don't read this chapter

We good?

Chapter Summary

Throwing fits and cat nip.

Chapter Notes

If you want to make sure you don't miss an up date, I do recommend that you subscribe. For some reason my recent updates have suffered a date change once I post them. *sigh*

Many thanks to all who commented, bookmarked and Fav'd. You totally rock.

TRIGGER WARNINGS IN END NOTES PLEASE READ IF YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROMBLEM WITH CERTAIN SUBJECT MATTER.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 4 – We good?

The very idea that someone thought that Odin would ever change his mind to benefit his younger son sent Loki into a towering rage that made the previous one look like a kid pouting over getting one cookie instead of two. Loki started spewing English, Elvish, old Æsir, fucking Swahili and something that sounded like it would normally be heard in a cat fight.

A lot of spitting and hissing, but thankfully no claws. At least not yet.

Tony was kind of marveling at the volume and the amount of syllables the god could get out on a single breath of air when Loki jumped off of him still screaming at the top of his lungs.

“I can’t take it anymore; I’m tired of putting up with his sanctimonious commands! I’m going to geld the pompous son-of-a-whore with my belt buckle!”

Shit!

Not good. So not good.

Odin did not seem to Tony like he was the kind of god who put up with anyone but himself having a meltdown. From the look of horror on Pepper’s face she agreed.

“No Lo, you can’t do that.” Tony yelped scrambling to grab and hold onto Loki’s arm, wrestling to keep him from charging towards the door. He swung the younger god around, trying to get him to stop screaming long enough to listen to reason.

“Let!”

“Me!”

“Go!”

It wasn't a full on nut shot... but it was close enough to make Tony stagger for a few moments.

Yeah, Loki fought dirty. Tony had kinda forgot about that.

It took several minutes, all three guards and the liberal application of some sort of mortal nip that Tony had asked Eir for in case of a minor emergency.

So much mortal nip that Tony, Pepper and Aldfrig ending up practically pouring the Trickster into his court garb.

OoooO

Pepper and Tony had fought hard on the deal with Odin. And while neither was happy with the concessions and terms of the final agreement, neither was Odin.

If no one was happy with a deal at the end, it must be fair to both sides Tony supposed with an internal sigh as Odin droned on, going over each clause in more than enough detail to have both him and Thor almost falling asleep.

Tony knew there were many things about this arrangement that were not going to make Loki the least bit happy. But as mitigating as some of the circumstances had been, when it was all said and done, the trickster god simply had no sense of balance. His response to a serious threat was to attempt complete annihilation. A solution of that sort was by its very nature permanent, but really not a good way of solving problems.

Mainly because it tended to upset a lot of people, and not just the ones being permanently eliminated as a threat.

Tony tried not to listen to the voice in the back of his head that pointed out how often this had also been his own preferred response to problems. But hey, fuck that. Tony was just going to have to learn to be responsible and level headed enough for both of them, because frankly the alternative of having the both of them stuck in that mindset did not bode well for civilization as a whole.

While Tony had been out to the BiFrost and then later in Loki's quarters with the healer, Odin's senior Logmar, a few of his clerks and Pepper had hammered out the final official version of the agreement.

Big one being, Loki would get his magic back. Fly in that ointment was that his mortal body would not be able to generate enough power for him to use it as easily as he could have in the old days. For instance, he could still decide to skip out on everyone by transporting himself through some portal or other, but a trip of any distance would so severely deplete him that he would most likely fall into an 'Odin' sleep. Or healing coma as Midgard would say once he got where he was going. This would give them time to track and retrieve him using a rune which Odin was going to place on him. So he could use any of his magic to do small experiments with or to protect himself in a pinch, but wouldn't have enough juice to pull off a major working or rain destruction down on anyone.

Whether he wanted it or not, which for the record he didn't, until such time as Loki was deemed to have become stable, Loki's immortal strength was being gifted to Tony to assist him in controlling Frigga's little boy. The head god not even entertaining the idea that Tony could do it without the strength of an Æsir.

Tony briefly debated informing Odin exactly why he didn't really need it. Unknown to Odin and of course SHIELD, his Extremis research for Pepper had allowed him to isolate the strength portion

of that drug. Without the regenerative qualities that produced the more serious unwanted side effects, the drug was almost viable. Almost being something to remember. Fortunately Tony had the added buffer of the rune induced damage control which allowed him to fine tune the serum's effects on his body before it could kill him. But in the end he kept quiet thinking to himself. If Loki's strength could be gifted to him from Odin, it might keep it from getting permanently lost someday if the old fart died unexpectedly or something. Besides maybe Loki could figure out a way for Tony to slip it to him on the sly. At any rate it didn't benefit Loki for Odin to house it. So hey, Tony might as well keep track of it for him.

After all it wasn't like he could set it down somewhere and forget it.

Because the conditions for Loki to regain his strength were so open ended, they had naturally caused a long discussion. Pepper wanted to nail down an agreement on exactly what proof of stability would consist of and making sure to get clear benchmarks. Once Loki's strength was returned to him... it would, like his magic, be subject to Tony yanking one or both at need. Read that one as 'If Loki goes crazy'. Not that Tony could use the magic; he would only be able to house it while he restricted Loki from using it.

After the BiFrost was complete Loki would be permitted to spend half the year on Midgard, coming and going as he pleased while under Tony's supervision. With of course the proviso that no time would be credited to his sentence while he was not on Asgard or engaged in a task for the All Father. Tony was particularly proud of that last clause, since he was pretty sure he could interest Odin in a few projects that the mischief maker could be researching and developing while living on Midgard. At that time, Tony would be permitted to accompany him if he chose to do so, provided he did not piss off the All-Father too much and get a time out from Asgard.

Of course it wasn't actually worded that way, but that is how it sounded when Odin rolled it out.

Until the BiFrost was completed, Tony would be permitted to come to Asgard for one whole day every other Earthgardian month, not Æsir turn, with Loki permitted to visit Midgard for one day on the alternate months.

Until the rest of his five hundred years was complete, Loki's services were subject to being claimed by the crown for various tasks. Which he was not permitted to refuse. Although from the 'hurump' and look Frigga gave Odin when she heard that clause, Tony would bet that the Queen would be monitoring the tasks quite closely.

The clause that had been added after Tony had left, the one that got Loki worked up into a frenzy was Clause fifteen. Loki would be able to keep his outward appearance or shift completely female... But unless he was female, certain other physical aspects would be locked into a dual form that was rare, but not unheard of in some of the older male Æsir sorcerers.

Even cat nipped up as he was, Loki growled menacingly. Which was met by an even more impressive growl from Odin, "Loki it is either this or you will shift and be locked into one of your female forms until you have successfully presented your husband with an heir."

"Spouse, we agreed the term was spouse," Tony said hurriedly, rolling an eye towards his angry, punch drunk, drugged up 'spouse' to be. "Not husband, not wife, spouse okay?" Although an irreverent voice inside of him thought about how much fun it would be to actually use the term Princess without the risk of getting slugged by his god. While it might be fun for Tony to have a full time princess, he wasn't sure he wanted to chance having to live with a Loki that actually could suffer from physical PMS as opposed to the mental PMS he was already afflicted with.

Not that the god would not make a stunning chick, long, slim, sexy hips, those eyes, those cheek

bones, that hair....

Frigga cleared her throat pointedly.

Earlier Loki had refused to go, so Tony escorted by Aldfrig, *had* paid a lighting visit to the Queen before the meeting started to explain what the problem was. She assured him that she would do her best to talk Odin into some sort of concession.

Odin all but rolled his eyes at her before continuing, “In the event of the successful birth of a child of this union, your sentence will be commuted.” He bent his gaze upon the trickster, “Barring any unfortunate incidents here or on Midgard.”

If this was Odin’s idea of a concession then maybe Loki had been correct when he asserted that Frigga wouldn’t be able to change the king’s mind.

Ignoring a less than discrete glare from Frigga the All Father continued, “In which case your husband would have proven unable to control you, this would thus be an indication that the union should be dissolved and your original sentence reinstated and modified to reflect the new transgression.”

“Ah, you will note that the term agreed to is proven illegal by the prevailing pre-existing legal code and an independent jury?” Pepper queried, looking steadily at Asgard’s supreme ruler, who unable to out stare her, huffed in agreement. “And we will need the document officially amended with these new items before signing.”

Odin sighed heavily and made the necessary notations on a paper thin screen he had with him. Pepper apparently could even wear down the King of the Universe. Not that Tony had doubted ‘that’ for a moment.

“Oh come on,” Tony said leaning over and shoulder bumping Loki, trying to cheer the god up. “What’s the worst that can happen? You’ve been a good boy for years and I’ve always wanted to call you princess anyhow.”

Loki raised such a woebegone face and Tony’s heart almost broke. Apparently there wasn’t enough cat nip left in his system to lift the broken trickster’s spirits with the finality of this discussion sucking the last bits of hope right out of him.

Finally obedient to the pointed look his wife was giving him to move it along, Odin quickly detailed the rights and responsibilities Tony and Loki would have for each other, towards Midgard and more importantly to Odin, towards Asgard.

Odin tapped his paper a few times and an amended document popped up through a previously absent slot in the table. He waved his hand until a pen appeared, signed the papers and slid them over like an unexploded bomb to sit in front of Tony for him to sign. An almost inaudible sigh escaped from the hunched figure beside him.

Thor looked worriedly from his brother beside him to his mother on the other side of the table.

Okay, so this wasn’t going to work, Tony thought.

“Be right back,” Tony told the room with desperate cheerfulness as he stood and hauled the lethargic Trickster up with him. “Come on Bambi, I want a quick word with you.”

Hustling the stumbling god into the adjoining room he looked around quickly and then shut the door behind them. Towing Loki over to a low, ridiculously well-padded window seat that was well

away from any eavesdropping at the door, Tony sat Loki down and stood in front of him.

“You are just going to make him angry with this delay,” Loki told him in a detached voice. Apparently exhausted from the screaming fit he had thrown earlier, the fight with Tony, the fight with his guards, and the hour long haranguing that Pepper had subjected him to while Tony was speaking to the queen. Not to mention of course the kick ass drugs he was currently flying with.

“Fuck ‘em. I need a minute here.” Tony muttered, running one hand up the side of Loki’s throat while his other hand snaked behind his head holding it still. He tipped his wrist a bit and counted far more beats than he wanted to find on Loki’s pulse point. “Damn, you’re sweating again,” he told him unnecessarily, brushing the hand no longer counting heart beats up and across Loki’s damp temple to his hair.

Placing two fingers under the troubled god’s chin he lifted it, locking his brown eyes to weary green ones. “We don’t have to do this if it bothers you that badly. I know you’re mad at me, but I honestly wouldn’t have even suggested this if I didn’t think you would agree to it.” Tony said, hoping that the god would not bail on him no matter how much he might deserve it.

“Why are you doing this?” Loki asked drearily, taking advantage of the first time they had been alone since Tony arrived on Asgard. He didn’t know it, but that was a question Tony had been asking himself since he started this whole process.

Dropping down beside him, twining his arm with Loki’s and forcing the god’s hand open so he could knit their fingers together Tony gave a half laugh. “Fuck if I know Reindeer Games.” He laid his chin on the taller god’s shoulder, looking at his strong profile, sculpted features and the sad little frown that hadn’t lifted the entire time he’d been here. He was really hoping the frown wasn’t because Tony was here. “Why not? If we don’t do this then I’ll most likely never see you again.”

Seeing the incredulous expression flowing across Loki’s face, he hurried to interrupt whatever it was the god was opening his mouth to say. “I’d miss you. I have missed you. I’ve missed you ever since they dragged your snarky prissy attitude and cute little ass back to Asgard the first time.”

Tony tugged the god over towards him with their twined arm and rubbed his face on Loki’s shoulder. “One of my greatest recent regrets is that I was a thoughtless jerk last year and didn’t get to see you or even get to have my pen pal this whole last year,” He said, voice huskier than he would have liked. “And worse I hurt your feelings and ruined the one time a year you get to de-stress and enjoy yourself without all of Ass-gard judging every breath you take.”

“Recent regrets?” Loki asked faintly on the tail end of a deep breath.

“Well yeah, I’ve had so many of them over the years I have to qualify you know.” Tony ducked his head and gave Loki a sideways half-grin. “The worst part is most of them were my own making. And let me tell you that really sucks.”

“You don’t think this is a bit drastic? It’s not like,” a blush rose from Loki’s neck to his sweating temples as he turned his face away, trying to slow his breathing. “We were even really... intimate, intimate.”

“No I don’t think it’s too drastic, not if you don’t.”

Attempting humor to see where it would get him, Tony fluttered his eyes up at the forlorn face above him, “Although I have been meaning to compliment you on how well you have been managing to do the nasty all these years and still hold on to your virtue. You are a totally distracting pro that way. So distracting it took me years to realize it even after I outted you.”

Tony rubbed his nose against Loki's jaw again. "Such a talented trickster."

Except for a deepening of his already present blush, Loki ignored the billionaire's attempt to make him laugh, which was not that big a surprise to Tony.

"Are you sure you wouldn't just rather marry some mortal woman and have a normal life?"

"Please. You do know I'm Tony Stark don't you? Tony Stark doesn't do normal. Besides, why would I want to marry someone I'm going to outlive?"

Annoyed, Loki pulled away from Tony crossing both his arms defensively across his chest, "The rune can be removed you know. You would merely start to age naturally again."

"Oh fuck no. I am going to live to piss on the graves of everyone who ever gave me any grief. Fury will need extra drainage for his plot. Besides," he swung his arm across Loki's back and hugged him close, "There is no way in hell I am going to leave you alone with these fuckers up here. Unless you pitch a fit over it, we're going to do this thing, fix their fucking bridge and get your ass back on Midgard so you can be happy for a while. Okay?"

Loki, still turned away, was looking at him out of the corner of his eye.

"I told you many years ago Stark. I don't share." Loki, still turned away, looking at him out of the corner of his eye.

"You did. I got the message."

"Apparently not Stark, or we would have never come to this impasse." Loki's lips thinned to a hard tight line and he started straight ahead.

And that, from the dismissive little huff Loki directed towards him, was it in a nutshell. Tony stood, moving to stand right in front of Loki. He ran his hands almost reflectively up and down the god's arms for a moment before cupping them against the back of Loki's neck and using his thumbs to nudge his chin up. Meeting the green eyes looking up at him, Tony put every ounce of persuasion into his voice that he knew how. "Loki, I'm not going to tell you that I'll change. Because honestly I don't think people really do. But I will tell you that I've decided to grow up. That I can promise you."

And from the thoughtful look that flowed across Loki's face that had not been something he expected to have hear.

Tony waited a moment, to see if the god was going to come back with a rebuttle of some sort.

To Tony's great relief, he didn't. But his look did grow thoughtful.

"Oh come on Loki, you hate this place, you have for years, even before your memory loss you hated it. So what's wrong? Did I fuck up so bad that you changed your mind about coming to live on Earth?" Tony asked, trying to coax the god to go along with the plan. "You know, living with a billionaire is generally considered to be a good thing on Earthgard."

Slowly, obviously fighting his way past the drugs Loki "I may hate it, but it is still my home. Even after my sentence is finished, I'll have to come back here if I ever want to visit my mother..." His voice was so sad, so tired, so ragged, that Tony could barely stand it. "This agreement is not going to sit well with most of Asgard. It will most likely always be an issue."

Loki looked searchingly at Tony, took a deep breath and continued almost reluctantly, "Truthfully,

I have to tell you that I've been playing you Stark. Since the day my mother arrived to bring me back to Asgard, I've been playing you to secure a place for myself in case of emergency."

When Loki had paused for so long, Tony had worked himself up into an internal little panic. But strangely enough the knot of tension that had lodged itself in his chest dissipated upon hearing this confession. If that is what Loki had to tell himself to make it through the day, Tony could live with it.

Relieved he bent and touched his forehead to Loki's.

"You know what? I'm fine with that. I'd be the last person to tell you not to look out for your own best interests. As for the rest.... Fuck 'em, you being a magic user instead of a sword swinging maniac is already an issue with them. And besides, your mother can come visit you on earth, even without Thor or Odin. Hell, I'll make a floor for Asgard; your mom can have a room there. We'll stick your guards there so she'll have protection; hire more from her birth realm if we need to. We can even declare it Asgard's 'Embassy.'"

Tony felt bad that Loki was so worried about having to deal with internal guilt for his past behavior in regards to Tony and the almost certain grief from the Æsir in general and the court in particular. However he is mostly worried that Loki will try to torch the damn place, magic or no magic once he finds out the whole story of the last few years.

Taking in the god's woebegone expression Tony continued, "Look, unless you decide you don't want to, which I am totally willing to take the heat for, Odin is going to do this deal. That isn't in question right now. Since we weren't allowed to have your direct input into the negotiations, I asked your mom to look over the terms and she agrees they're as good as we're going to get."

Tony patted his knee, "So... What do you say? Are we good to go?"

"You are undoubtedly a fool Stark."

"Again, Rudolf, you aren't telling me anything I haven't already heard before."

OoooO

Shortly after Tony and Loki returned to sign the contracts, Odin declared it was time to go to dinner.

When Tony protested that they hadn't had the Q&A session yet, Big Daddy All Father declared that, 'such words would go better after we all eat'." So like it or not, they are going to dinner now.

Lagging behind and leaving Pepper outside to guard the door and give instructions for later to Loki's personal guards, Tony crowded his distressed god into the corner, pulled out his tin of Mortal Nip and stuck it under Loki's nose. "Come on Mister Mistoffelees," He urged. "Take a couple of good whiffs. You really need to settle down if we have to go make nice with daddy at dinner." Since Loki had started pulling in oxygen like a jet engine the moment they had sat back down across from Odin, he couldn't help but immediately get several big lungfuls of the pungent salve. Especially since Tony was following his movements when he tried to turn his face away, keeping the drug right in front of his face.

Watching closely, Tony could see Loki's breathing slow down and his eyes losing the over sharp focus they got when he was stressing. "Okay, I think that will do." He started to pull the tin away when Loki grabbed his hand and inhaled a few more times. "Okay, good, but no more or we'll be pouring you into your seat." Tony told him, straining to tug the tin away.

“Is it working?” Pepper asked having popped back in to the room a minute earlier.

“Yeah, I think it is,” Tony told her with a small smile, noting the slower breathing pattern of the man beside him. “Looks like it worked real well, hell maybe too well.” Tony popped open the tin and took a couple of hits to calm his nerves.

“Tony!” Pepper snapped.

“What? I’m nervous and stressed too.” He mock whined, before looking respectfully at the now re-closed tin. “Pep, this is some great stuff. You want to try it?”

“No, Tony. At least one of us will have to stay on the ball.”

“Are we going to dinner Tony?” Loki asked, leaning boneless against the wall.

“Yeah buddy, we are right now. Are you hungry?” He asked as he guided a fairly woozy Loki to the door to pick up their guard contingent and join in the festivities. Or at least what passes for festivities in the land of crazy space Vikings.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. May thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Beta'd by the most wonderful Mima Mia

-- TRIGGER WARNINGS -- TRIGGER WARNINGS -- TRIGGER WARNINGS -- TRIGGER WARNINGS --

This chapter will *mention* - Arranged marriage, Forced compatibility, intersexual beings and *contain* character being subject to dubious / involuntary drugging and slightly recreational drug use. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Most of it is glossed over, but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on those topics. Please DO NOT READ if you will have issues with any of these items.

Dinner with the other folks

Chapter Summary

Tony and Pepper experience dining Asgardian style and Fandral manages to aggravate Tony over dinner.

Chapter Notes

Our story so far - A year after Loki was returned to Asgard, Frigga arranged for Loki and Tony to correspond and for Loki to visit Earth for one evening without Odin knowing about it. Only thing was Tony didn't realize it a secret so he was babbling on about it during a time when Odin upon his all seeing throne turned his gaze towards Thor's companions. Despite Odin declaring that he didn't want Loki to return to Earth again, Frigga arranged a yearly visit for her younger son as long as he was disguised... Surprised that Tony didn't recognize him in his female form, Loki thought it would be funny to string him along a few years. Not an unusual set up time for a godly jape. This not only tickled his trickster sensibilities but also kept Tony from inadvertently saying anything that Odin might find out about.

Eventually however Tony caught on and he and Loki continued to meet annually until the year Tony became so excited at the chance to buy a rare antique car that he not only forgot Loki's visit, but also got drunk and brought a date home with him while Loki watched from the terrace. Loki reduced their monthly communications to business only and traded his by now Odin sanctioned yearly visit for a loosening of the restrictions on his powers. Frantic to resume his relationship with his best bud with benefits Tony begs Frigga for entry into Asgard to propose an alliance between Loki and himself.

Beta'd by the ever wonderful Mima Mia.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

This was supposed to be longer, but my Beta ran into some scheduling conflicts. Hopefully I can post the rest of it by next week. Sorry.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 5 –Dinner with the other folks

It was your standard block-buster movie, dining hall of the gods. Tons of gold... Gold on the walls, gold on the tables and gold on the lavishly dressed guests being paraded up to the high table so that they could greet Odin and the queen.

Not that Tony cared; he'd spent the whole of the first course carrying on a whispered conversation with his completely blitzed godling. Although, Tony was of the firm opinion those last few whiffs of Mortal-nip might have been a mistake. Once again taking the wine goblet out of Loki's unresisting fingers he set it slightly out of reach. "Why don't you try some of this?" he urged, handing Loki a goblet of juice that Pepper had managed to discretely request once they had realized the full extent of Loki's Mortal-Nip intoxication. No matter how much being in Odin's company and on display at the high table stressed him out, the Trickster didn't need to be drunk as well as high.

Looking around for something to distract Loki from frowning down at the fruit juice, Tony glanced at the receiving line.

"Holy hell. Who is that guy?" Tony squeaked under his breath, nudging the distracted Loki to get his attention. Possibly one of the top ten hottest looking guys Tony had even seen, after of course sex on legs sitting beside him, was approaching the high table. Tall, slim, great cheekbones, creamy flawless complexion, silver white hair and dark ruby eyes. Elric of Melniboné had nothing on this guy. Beside him, Tony heard Pepper give a smothered gasp, so he knew it wasn't just him.

"Hummm?" Loki murmured distractedly, casting heavily lidded eyes towards the receiving line to see who Tony was referring to before returning his attention to his goblet. "Oh. That's King Frey's friend Lord Alfild... His very close friend," Loki said, straightening up and peering at the object of Tony's curiosity. "He is most likely here visiting his sister."

"He's an Asgardian?" Tony asked, taking in the details of his scarlet and black outfit, constructed so much like what Loki normally wore, but in some kind of heavy Dupioni-like silk which hugged the slim figure closely and emphasized its natural hotness.

"No, of course not." Loki tutted, "He's Álfheimr, no respectable Asgardian male would appear in public like that," he said, raking his eye down the man's form.

Oh...

What a damn shame, Tony thought spirits plummeting.

"Mine were certainly prettier," Loki observed dismissively.

Tony almost got mental whiplash.

"Your what was prettier?" Tony asked, still not able to take his eyes off the guy, ideas churning, a tiny spark of hope flaring up in him.

"My Silda-raana Lintitinwe of course." Loki leaned over very close to Tony, his breath warming Tony's ear, "It means Moon and Stars. Of course mine were usually gold accented with emeralds not silver and rubies." Tony's glance slid over just in time to take in a frown and the beginnings of a heart melting pout. "I also had a set of emeralds and diamonds chased with adamantite, but I gave them all away before I returned to Asgard. It's not like I could wear them here." Loki huffed, his pout intensifying.

Okay, that particular pout was new, but really fucking cute. Tony could totally live with a gorgeous god that pouted, as long as they looked that adorable.

Maybe they had overdone it just a bit with Eir's relaxation med, but Tony decided to try and get a goodly supply of Asgardian Mortal-Nip to take home with him. Some to analyze, some for emergency calming of highly strung gods, maybe some for Brucie baby to see if it could recall Mean Green quicker... Loki's free hand found his under the table and laced their fingers together. Definitely some for the both of them to use recreationally to de-stress after a hard day and all that. After all Eir had assured him it wasn't habit forming or anything.

Leaning closer to Tony, Loki's purring voice recalled his attention, "I gave my favorite set to Lord Frey's official consort... They were worthy of nothing less than royalty," he said, his words slurring slightly.

Tony slowly turned his head towards Loki, the god hadn't moved so their faces were separated only by inches.

"You wore a set like that in your hair?" Tony asked breathlessly, just to make sure he wasn't misunderstanding.

King Frey's good buddy was wearing several different types of jewels scattered through his long hair at various heights. Some were clear sparkling diamond-like stones affixed high, some were ruby drops that swung on invisible threads and occasionally he had tiny sparkling silver and ruby crusted beads somehow laced onto various thin strands of hair.

"No." Loki replied petulantly, dashing Tony's hopes. Long lashes swept down a moment in remembrance, all black and feathery on high pale cheek bones before flicking back up. His deep green gaze caught Tony's. "Not at all like those, I told you mine were exquisite, the jewels were flawless and the craftsmanship superb."

Tony was caught up in thinking how fucking hot Loki would look decked out in a silky outfit like that rather than his normal layer upon layer of stiff leather, with his glorious black hair sprinkled with jewels...

The mental image caused his brain to shut down.

OoooO

Pepper was a miracle worker. With only a few whispered words and a pair of raised eyebrows from Tony, as soon as the second course was presented and people in the hall were free to move around she had excused herself with a good natured sigh and managed to hunt down a member of Lord Alfild's entourage. Fortunately, the Álfheimr like the Æsir did the All Speak thing and Pepper was able to gather information and recommendations from her. After a quick discussion with the Lady Meral about tailors and jewellers, Pepper messaged a few of Loki's guards that weren't on hall duty, returned to their suite to pick up some items and then returned to the high table to wait.

After that Tony completely lost track of her comings and goings. Every time she sat down, a servant would come whisper in her ear and she would tell Tony she was going to go consult with Odin's Logmars, meet with someone recommended to her, check with the guards or something else that Tony wasn't pay any attention to. Frigga noticed, but Thor and Loki were oblivious to her comings and goings. Thor because he was being typically princely and telling loud stories about Midgard to his friends, Loki because he was still just this side of somnolent. The young god had more than once leaned heavily on Tony whispering all the terrible things he was going to do and how miserable he was going to make the billionaire for agreeing to anything with Odin... Before rousing and making an effort to answer something his mother was asking him.

OoooO

Loki was stroking his thumb along the back of Tony's hand and right in the middle of a long rambling list of things he wanted changed in the tower, interspersed with a descriptions of the knife play Tony was going to experience if he ever cheated once they were joined, when a loud shout of laughter from Thor derailed every conversation at the high table.

Tony sighed.

Apparently too loudly for Pepper's patience as she viciously jabbed him in the ribs. He turned accusing eyes upon her, "Jeeze Pep."

Pepper was still extremis enhanced in the strength department and when she jabbed his ribs, even just in passing to try to shut him up.... It fricken hurt. Unfortunately for Tony's ribs, she seemed to have taken care of most of her business and was settled back at the table so she could resume her 'Tony sitting' duties.

"Don't you have anyone else to go and bother?" He grumbled.

"Oh, Tony, I'm so sorry. It was an accident." Pepper cooed with all the sincerity of a beauty contestant complimenting her chief rival. Rolling his eyes, he noticed that while he and Loki had been talking...

Okay, so maybe it had been more like Loki had been venting and threatening with maybe a side of honey-do listing. At any rate Tony *'had'* been enjoying the sound of Loki's voice washing over him while he gazed into his god's gorgeous green eyes while the people sitting on the other side of the table from them had been rotating in and out with each course.

Kind of like the Æsir version of speed dating. Apparently Space Vikings liked to mingle during dinner, so there was a lot of coming and going. Just not enough of the 'going' part to suit Tony as Thor greeted the Fuckers Four.

"Sit my friends, I would like to introduce you to my Midgardian Shield Brother," the Thunderer boomed, gesturing at seats opening up in front of them as some contemporaries of Odin's were getting up to leave. Zena and Loki had practically hissed at each other when she passed them to go sit down.

"Loki," Frigga admonished under her breath as she stood, eliciting an angry shrug from her dark haired son, before she and Odin drifted over to speak to the Álfheimr contingent several tables away.

With well-practiced moves, the dining staff, yet again, cleared everyone's places and set up for the dessert course as Thor's friends settled across from him them, flanked by a couple of people introduced to Tony as senior weapons instructors. Jackie Chan, the least objectionable of the four as far as Tony was concerned ended up sitting across from Loki, Eryol Flynn and Burl Ives across from Odin and Frigga's empty seats and fortunately Zena pain-in-the-ass was the furthest away, sitting across from Thor.

Hogan was the strong quiet type, her Sif-ness was content to glower at Tony. Why Sif was glaring at him he had no fricken clue. After all he wasn't the one who hissed at her. Volstagg was a truly dedicated trencherman whose job it was apparently to agree with or collaborate whatever was being said in between bites, which left Fandral to take up the conversational burden for the group. Between him and Thor recounting their past deeds of glory, anyone else would be hard pressed to get a word in edgewise. Seemingly impressed with Thor's description of a fight between the Avengers and the Abomination, Sir Lady Locks tried to engage Tony in a discussion of group tactics. Volstagg occasionally chimed in with a question for Tony, but since talking took time away

from his eating, he didn't interject too often.

Tony was getting antsy. He wished the king and queen would just hurry up with their damn visiting so they could get Loki's damn Q&A session over. Distracted and frankly disinterested in talking to anyone who caused Loki to tense up like he did, it took more than a few prompts from Pepper to get him to respond to Fandral. And when he did, it wasn't at any great length, because frankly he could care less what Dashing and Debonair thought of his short answers and reluctance to elaborate. Eventually the blonde blabber mouth launched into telling his own tales leaving Tony to listen with half an ear while chivvying Loki to eat a bit more. All while silently willing Odin and Frigga to hurry the fuck up.

Eventually, even Fandral had to pause and take a breath so Tony decided to grab the conversational reins. "Hey Loki, how come you never went on any of these quests?" Tony asked.

"I was with them," Loki said quietly, lifting tired eyes from his plate.

"Indeed he was," boomed Thor. "I would not leave my brother behind when there was glory to be won."

"So you were there when they took on the Stone Dragons?" Tony asked the still slightly woozy god whose forehead wrinkled in deep thought. Tony held up a hand, to keep Fandral from chiming in. He was talking to *'his'* god, not the John Frieda reject.

"Yes, of course. I made multiple duplicates of all of us so the Dragons would be confused about where to strike." Loki paused a moment shrugging. "I also put a dagger in the throat of their handler. Without him directing them, they were really much easier to kill."

"Really?"

Loki wrinkled up his face and nodded. "Really."

"What about that Battle of Hamstimmer that Volstagg insisted that he tell?"

"HimeStamyr? Ummm, let me think... I had scry'd to find out which band of warriors actually contained their leader and I think I shape shifted as one of them..."

"A sentry Loki, you shape shifted to look like one of the sentries," Thor boomed.

Loki's head bobbed loosely, "A sentry," He agreed, "So I could take out the other sentries so they had no warning of our approach."

"And you fell off your horse," Volstagg said with a laugh. "Noted horseman that you are."

Brows furling, Tony looked at Thor and then at Fandral and Volstagg, "Okay... so why wasn't the sentry bit mentioned when Errol Flynn and the Round Guy here were telling that story?"

"Freind Tony, normally everyone tells their own tales, and Loki has never been one to boast overmuch."

"Yeah, not buying it Thor. Chunky Monkey and Vidal Sassoon over there told us every detail of what the rest of you guys were doing in exhaustive detail, but I don't recall them even mentioning that Loki was even there. Hell, Chubby even recounted what you guys cooked for dinner."

"Ah well you see, the tales mainly focus on the fighting," Fandral explained, he looked over at Volstagg. "Usually."

“Which none of you might have gotten to or survived without his help right?” Tony asked, his voice picking up volume. Pepper elbowed him hard enough to make him grunt.

“We did mention that Loki fell off his horse.”

It was all Tony could do not to roll his eyes. Of course if he did, Pepper would probably jab him into next Tuesday. “Oh yeah, important detail there.”

“Well I did,” Loki admitted with a small lop sided grimace. “Terribly embarrassing, they had a coterie of Fire Drakes that Thor cut loose when he attacked, hoping they would turn on their masters in the confusion. Instead they disembowelled my horse. We had to put the poor thing down it was so injured.”

Tony looked at Fandral, “So all Loki did that whole adventure was fall off his injured horse?”

“Well no, of course not.”

“We went on quests without him.” Sif said.

“Ay Sif, glorious deeds.” Volstagg looked over at Tony, “Did you know Man of Iron that she once took on the destroyer all by herself?”

Thor let out a low groan and buried his face in his goblet.

“Please, it’s Ironman or Tony. Enough with the man-of and son-of shit.”

“She didn’t kill it. Thor did.” Fandral said hurriedly, trying to smooth over Tony’s snit. He ended up raising his drink to Sif, “But she was the first to stop it when she jumped on its back and struck her sword through it.

“Momentarily stopped it. Yeah, I heard about that one.” Tony said dismissively.

Loki brows were drawn and he leaned forward, looking forward to get a better look at Fandral. “When did you fight the destroyer? Did someone break into the weapons vault while I was on Midgard?”

Fandral coughed, “Er.. No, actually.. It wasn’t in the vault.”

“Why wasn’t it guarding the vault?” Loki asked frowning.

“You know what? It’s not important.” Tony said standing up, and tugging on Loki.

“But why--”

“Loki, I think your mom wants you.” He said, nodding all around and waving to the Queen who had glanced over when he stood up. “Come on Bambi, let’s say good night and see what your folks are up to.”

Chapter End Notes

As always **comments and reviews are greatly appreciated**,
if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be

wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. May thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Also, please go show some love to a really cute agnsty Kid Loki fic - Mama do you love me? by masquerade_wolf <http://archiveofourown.org/works/1421566>

TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS
TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS

There will be references to Male on Male sex. If this is a problem for you please don't read it.

I don't own the Avengers or Thor, they are the property of Marvel and Disney, and are not my intellectual property. There is no financial gain made from this nor will any be sought. This is for entertainment purposes only.

Time to come clean

Chapter Summary

Odin finally fesses up. Loki takes it about as well as can be expected. Tony comes prepared.

Chapter Notes

Chapter 7 is still a mess and hasn't even been finished, let alone sent to be Beta'd... I will do my best to get it out on time, but just in case please be aware that I AM trying really hard, but sadly RL is pimp slapping me more than it has in the last five years. :(

Beta'd by the wonderful Lavanyalabelle.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 6 - Time to come clean

He hadn't had a day this bad in centuries, at least none that he still held the memories for. First there was Stark and his insane proposal, and though it galled him to his very core it was realistically the best solution that someone in Loki's position could ever hope for. Which for the record he had no intention of admitting.

To anyone.

Even though it had been as painful as crawling across glass shards naked to sign the thing, Loki would have been a fool to turn the agreement down. Stark was certainly a vindictive, womanizing bastard, but he had a powerful position in his society and an abundance of wealth. Neither of which Loki had anymore. And no one knew better than Loki that the realms weren't very kind to those who were poor and powerless. Particularly when they hadn't been previously.

Granted Loki could try to rebuild his fortune once he was released. He wasn't stupid, but starting with almost nothing and surrounded by ill will... Well you could just say his chances for a misstep would be greatly increased and the likelihood of someone not waiting until he was down to kick him would almost be too high to be calculated.

Loki felt a shiver run down his spine.

Damn Stark.

The amazing part of the whole affair is that the wretched man didn't even know how much pressure Odin had been applying for just such an agreement. He had several times reminded Loki that as a prince he had very little say so in whom he married. As an imprisoned prince he had even less and that neither the choice nor the timing had ever been his to command.

Oh Loki could have totally spurned the mortal, acted so badly Stark would have retired in disgust... And then what? He would just end up shackled to another who was not as well positioned or as wealthy. He'd be subjected to the orders of some old fool who was granted occasional access to the crown in return for keeping his granddaughter's disgraced husband leashed and tucked away on some remote estate when his services weren't needed. The fallen prince's only worth beyond that how many children he could produce to provide a bit more of a tie with the royal family.

Not that he suspected Stark of that, the part about the children anyway. But Stark had already benefited greatly from his service to the royal family in ways no Æsir would have. He'd received health, healing, rare metals otherwise unavailable on his planet and tutoring in subjects unavailable in Midgard.

In the back of his mind he had always known how much the businessman benefited from their association. However the certain realization that sentiment was not what caused Stark to make this offer was like a sharp blow, an almost physical pain causing Loki to gasp and stumble slightly.

Stark's hand, tightened around his arm, steadying him, and Loki could almost feel the man's eyes upon him. The mortal no doubt thinking his misstep was from the drug he'd been given to calm him rather than the cosmic truth that had just forcibly presented itself for his edification.

A truth that he had conveniently been ignoring during his yearly visits to Midgard.

To the others who had presented themselves to Odin vying for an alliance, he would have been a financial burden in exchange for immediate access to the crown and future ties to the royal family. But to Stark... To Stark, Loki would have been a treasure beyond the dreams of avarice. Hadn't the mortal just this evening told Loki that he would be the last person to tell someone not to look out for their own best interests? The first thing to remember about interacting with Stark was that there always had to be something in it for him.

Knowledge, money, leverage, accolades, exclusivity.... The last being a major requirement. Stark revelled in being envied for the quality or uniqueness of his possessions. His ironman suits, his custom cars, his tower, his beach estate, his robots, Jarvis... And he now owned a fallen Prince from outer space who would give him sole access to an otherwise unreachable realm. Oh no, Stark would never join with someone normal, he'd said so himself not two hours ago. And from his years of watching the man, Loki knew he would never ally himself with someone who couldn't bring some grand prize to the table. That Loki also embodied, literally, a form that Stark desired in a bed partner would have just been a bonus for the mortal.

Loki's head felt like it was going to explode. With pain and dark thoughts swirling through him he decided his best interested lay with taking the irritating mortal's advice. Although he wasn't sure Stark would be too pleased with the results.

OoooO

It didn't take long for them to settle into the small receiving room his parents used for private gatherings. Father was of course sitting in his huge wingback chair; the wooden legs and arm supports were ornately carved, the cushions were a rich brown leather that almost shimmered. To Odin it was just a chair, but it could not have been more throne-like if it had been solid gold and

inlaid with gems. Thor ignored the matching, slightly smaller chair beside him that mother usually sat in, choosing instead to pace back and forth behind the chairs. Tony and his mother flanked him on the buttery soft cream leather couch opposite the king, while Ms Potts sat in one of the russet silk over-stuffed chairs that completed the sides of the seating group, choosing the one nearest to the door.

Even knowing it was going to be very bad Loki was totally unprepared for exactly how very bad it ended up being. The runes writhing as they ripped themselves from his back were the least of the pain he had to endure. Physical pain after all would pass.

The bald recounting of his deeds during Thor's coronation and exile were so much worse than he could have expected. He turned wild eyes to Thor. How could he even stand to be in Loki's presence after such betrayal? What on earth had he been thinking to let Frost Giants into Asgard?! Granted he could see where he might have thought that Thor wasn't ready to be king, but still. The Jotuns had killed two guards and could have killed so many more if they had actually returned the Casket of Ancient Winters to Jotunheim. All of which was...

His thoughts kept shying away as his crimes multiplied until '*beyond bad*' was all his troubled, jumbled thoughts could come up with.

Sending the Destroyer to Midgard after Thor? Assassinating the Jotun king and destabilized that already fractious realm and then trying to destroy the entire realm? How in the Nine could he have thought that any of that was a good idea?

Curling in on himself, Loki knew he had deserved being blown off the bridge and into the void by the blast of the Bi-Frost's destruction.

"We don't know why Loki," Thor told him in what ended up being an ongoing theme of this evening recital. He felt Stark shifting uneasily beside him. Glancing over towards the mortal, Loki noticed the tight muscles around the engineer's eyes and the small twitch at the base of his jaw. Stark caught his eye and shook his head minutely. Indicating that this was clearly not the time to delve further into what Stark did or didn't know.

Loki was very glad that he had the foresight to ask Stark to record at least the audio for him. Something was very wrong, but he just couldn't focus through the pain of his head and back and Eir's Thrall Relaxant. He was missing a lot, it wasn't so much that Odin, Thor and Frigga were lying, Loki could always spot those immediately. However there were things that were not said, or perhaps said with an emphasis that shouldn't necessarily have been there.

Using the Bi-Frost as a weapon?

But that of course was not the end of it. Oh no, not with his luck. Thor looked pale as he recounted his tale of Loki's invasion of New York. Loki had to swallow rather desperately several times as his entire body tried to turn itself inside out. Mother sitting beside him, had her arm twined with his and had taken his right hand onto her lap stroking it softly to calm him. The first time he had gagged Stark had leapt up and poured him a goblet of water from one of the metal pitchers sitting on the sideboard and grabbed him a soft cloth napkin.

Odin just watched him, no doubt disgusted with Loki's show of weakness. But when he looked up from the ornately figured knot work rug that bounded the furniture group they were occupying something in his father's perfectly composed face struck him as off, and caused some of his jumbled thoughts to fall into at least a semblance of order. Something was missing, maybe several something's, but one at least was required instant clarification.

“Why would the Chitauri give me an army?” he asked Odin, interrupting Thor who was currently droning on about some kind of circular container that had fallen out of Midgard’s flying fortress.

“We don’t know.” Odin said, almost placidly.

“What explanation did I provide at my trial,” he asked faintly, somehow knowing he was not going to like the answer.

“You didn’t.” Odin told him, still calm and composed, not upset or annoyed at this reminder of defiance on Loki’s part.

Fortunately Thor did not have the ability to remain so composed.

“Thor, what exactly did you say at my trial?” he asked as his mother hugged him a bit tighter and he felt Stark shift uneasily.

Thor just looked at him, almost panicked his eyes slid over towards Odin, who refused to meet his eldest son’s gaze.

There had been no trial? Surely that couldn’t be. But his heart, which was trying to pound its way out of his chest told him that it most certainly could be.

“There was no trial was there?” He hissed. “You condemned me summarily without a trial didn’t you.” When Odin didn’t answer he tried to leap to his feet in agitation, but both his mother and Stark were holding him down. “Didn’t you!” He screamed, “Did you even privately question me before you erased my memory?”

Odin didn’t respond or change his expression.

“Let go of me,” he snarled at Stark who had a firm grip on his arm and was trying to drag him back down. Stark ignored him, holding him down as best he could. Loki could barely hear his mother trying to calm him as he struggled against her grip also.

Furious and breathless, head pounding sickly Loki glared at Odin. “What did I ever do to deserve such treatment at your hands Father, how have I sinned against you to deserve this?”

“Loki--”

“Quiet Thor,” he spat swinging his body towards the thunder god as much as he could with Frigga and Tony hanging on to him. “Unless you know why the lowliest thrall in Asgard is allowed a trial no matter how heinous their crime but I am not, I don’t want to hear from you.”

“He rounded angrily on Tony, “Did they or did they not agree to tell me what happened as part of the alliance agreement?” Loki hissed, again trying to wrench his forearm out of Tony’s grip.

“You know, they did,” Tony said. “And just the stuff I know about, your pop is skipping big parts of, but I had no idea that you hadn’t even had a trial.” He turned and glowered at Odin, “Why didn’t you even question him about the how he ended up with a Chitauri army? Don’t you think it might be important?”

Odin’s eyes flashed at the mortal’s disrespectful tone. “It is not for you to question me Anthony Stark. Once Heimdall alerted me that Loki had appeared on earth I did not leave Hliðskjálf for a second. From my throne I saw everything that Loki did. There was no need to allow someone with Loki’s talents of twisting speech, to subject myself or the court to his explanation of why black was white.” Odin declared his speech as sharp and final as one of Thor’s thunder claps. Loki was

livid.

Apparently defending yourself was considered 'twisting speech' if you were a second prince.

"If I was truly trying to take over Midgard don't you think I would have shrouded my actions from your sight!" he spat, wrenching his hand away from his mother's grip. "I've been hiding myself quite successfully from you and Heimdall for years. Why wouldn't I do it if I was invading another realm? Did you even think to ask yourself that? Why wouldn't you ask me?"

"So do you know why the Chitauri gave him an army or don't you?" Tony growled, shifting the hand that had been around Loki's arm to his lower back and using his left hand to grip Loki's forearm.

"Stop that!" Tony admonished sharply as a snarling Loki tried to pull away from his grip. He maintained eye contact with Odin waiting impatiently for his answer.

Odin answered. "Loki has always had a gift for convincing people to give him what he wants."

"So while the Chitauri were giving him all this stuff, did you at least find out how they also gave him blue eyes?" Tony asked apparently disgusted with the amount of important data that the Asgardian King was apparently willing to fritter away.

Tony looked at him and then slid his glance past a horrified and upset Frigga before landing on Thor. "Thor... buddy... I know you are not the sharpest sword in the Asgardian Armoury, but you did notice that your brother was sporting bright blue peepers during the invasion didn't you?"

Loki was confused, his eyes had always been green, but when he looked at Thor for an explanation, his brother sat there looking strangely stuffed... and shamefaced.

"You know Thor, like how Clint's hazel eyes turned a bright Tesseract blue?" Tony asked enunciating slowly like he was speaking to someone who was terminally slow-of-thought.

When no one answered him Tony's shoulders sagged and he said with a heartfelt groan. "You people are a chief prosecutor's worse nightmare, you know that right?"

After a few moments of sitting in silence Tony spoke up again. "Look, just tell him the rest, let's get it over with."

"The... rest? What else did I do?" Loki asked hesitantly. Before this evening, he had been aware in the sketchiest way that he had seriously fought Thor, somehow been responsible for the destruction of the BiFrost and fought against the Avengers for some reason. And while he now knew much more about those actions, the nature of that information was frankly disappointing, and he was heartsick that he would never know why he did those things. Horrible yes, but surely he had once had some reason to think those actions might be correct.

But what if I didn't? What if I am just some ungrateful, unfeeling psychopath, with no empathy or remorse? What if I had to be so reduced just to keep the rest of Asgard safe. Loki shivered. The rest? Did Odin rip my memory out because I had done even more heinous deeds? What else did I do?

Loki could feel the occasional fine tremor running down his body. He was aware that his mother was stroking his hair back and pressing soft kisses on his cheek.

Odin sighed. "Loki, you are our son, and we love you dearly despite your recent actions, however we are not your birth parents, you were adopted."

“No.”

A cold burning weight settled itself over his chest.

His mother touched his chin, trying to get him to turn and look at her. He jerked his face away from her.

Not his mother.

Frigga and Odin were not his parents. Thor was not his brother? He was not a prince? Not even a fallen one?

“Adopted?” he stared blindly at Odin, not even caring if his voice cracked.

Everyone in the room should be able to hear his heart pound. Each beat hard and hurtful keeping pace with the pounding in his temples.

“How?” he croaked in a pathetic plea for answers that would make sense. Vaguely aware of the distressed noises that Pepper was making.

“I found you alone and crying in an icy temple after the final battle of Jotunheim.” Odin said quietly.

“Who would take a baby into battle on another realm?” he asked, confused. He knew he wasn’t thinking anywhere near as clearly as he normally did, but that just didn’t make sense. There was no way it could make sense.

Loki felt sick. Feeling and reason tangled and echoing, questions crashing in his mind like icy waves, washing over rational thought, leaving him gasping for air as his body tried to cope with the attack on his mind.

Adopted. Oh Yggdrasil, that would explain so much.

Loki would give anything to just be somewhere alone to cry and scream and... just somewhere private, even for just a few minutes.

Head hung low, he flicked his eyes over towards Thor. So many times he wonder why Odin over looked him for his brother. So many times he wondered why his appearance didn’t match the rest of his family. Well if they weren’t really his family it all made sense. How could he have missed it? He felt sick at his own stupidity. Centuries of clues and he missed every one of them. And he had called Thor stupid.

A bitter laugh broke from his lips before he strangled it.

His laugh was not the only thing that was strangling. It was no wonder he was having trouble breathing, you can’t breathe when you are drowning in your own stupidity. Stark was tugging at him, trying to get his attention, speaking, saying something, but it wasn’t important so Loki ignored him.

“My son, you were not born in Asgard.”

Loki’s brows furled, and he looked overwhelmed. “None of the--”

“I found you on Jotunheim my son, alone, dying, exposed to the cold. You were far too small for a Frost Giant, I felt sorry for you, so I brought you home to your mother.”

"You are my son, darling." The woman beside him murmured, brushing his hair with her hand.

"I'm a..." Loki struggled, unable to finish the sentence. He swallowed hard and tried again. "I'm a Jotun?"

Out of the corner of his eye he saw Tony nodding, but the mortal didn't appear to be repulsed at sitting beside someone who might be a Jotun. Tony just looked tired and sad. Tony felt pity for Loki. Of all the things he never wanted... betrayal and pity. He had them both in abundance.

A Jotun? That was not the least bit possible. Jotun's are ten foot tall, with red eyes, black nails and blue skin. He held out his hands, examining them closely, even though they were the same hands he has had for the last thousand years. His skin is definitely not blue.

A thought slithered into his mind, winding around doubt and squeezing through cracks in certain knowledge. It was a brightly colored thought, because nature always makes sure its more venomous creatures are well marked.

No.

His skin is not Jotun blue. However his skin is also not the color of a sun kissed Æsir either. Dismayed, Loki drew a length of hair through his fingers, holding it in front of him and he studied it intently. His hair is not Æsir blonde or red or even the less common sandy brown. No. His hair is black, not even dark brown or brown black, but true black, almost one might say.... A blue black.

Loki's mouth opened, but someone else used it to speak. "The king of Asgard found an unknown Frost Giant child abandoned in a Jotun temple after the final battle and brought it home with him to raise as his son?" he asked quietly, looking up from the hair he had been rolling between his fingers.

"Yes."

"For no reason other than pity?"

"Yes."

Ignoring her soft cry of pain, Loki pulled away from the woman petting his hair. "You obviously believe me to be stupid." He growled menacingly, feeling the mortal stiffen on one side of him and the woman start to shake on the other. "Don't you?" he said with quiet menace.

"No my son."

"Oh yes you do. I am not the son of Odin, but you know whose son I am don't you?"

"Loki, you were an abandoned babe, there is no way to know who left you there.

"Liar!" Loki hissed, feeling his features twisting into a fierce grimace. "You would not drag a foundling brat home to raise as your own if I was an merely an insignificant by-blow of a foreign race. Whose child am I? Are my parents even dead? Was I a hostage to someone good behavior perhaps?"

"No, you were never a hostage, your parents are dead." Odin refused to look away, keeping his regard locked on Loki.

"Did you notice how they got you to sign the agreement, *before*; before they let you know I was a nobody, a nothing?" He asked Tony with bitter snarl, not taking his scornful eyes off of Odin. "The

so honorable King of Asgard pawning off his tawdry wares to an unsuspecting mortal. Disgusting.” Loki was practically spitting with rage. “That what you meant about my natural form isn’t it. Because I’m a freak like all the other monsters on Jotunheim, aren’t I?”

“Loki!” Thor protested slamming his clenched fist down on his thigh, “Father would not do such a thing, and you are not...”

“Shut! Up! Thor!” Loki punctuated each shouted word, while struggling with the mortal clinging to him before abandoning his attempt to get loose and just dragging Stark up with him. Standing in front of the couch, he had more room to move. He finally twisted loose and was able to push Stark away, leaving the man to stumble and almost fall on top a vacant armchair on the far side of the grouping.

“Shut up! Shut up! *Shut up!*”

Thor, standing beside Odin allowed his eyes to uneasily travel from Odin to Loki, Pepper slid out of her chair and backed towards the door.

“If you know that my parents are dead, then you must know who they were.” Loki gave Odin an insolent, darkly cheeky, toothy smile, his eyes twinkling with insanity and his head tilted just a bit in inquiry. “Tell me Odin-King...” His voice was brittle, breathless and rigidly polite, “Please do tell me... Were they dead when you stole me from the temple?”

Loki paused dramatically, and everyone in the room flinched away from this new Loki. He waved his hands in a gracefully negative motion, continuing with manic cheerfulness and a wide open grin that was woefully out of place on his tight anger coiled body. “Oh pardon me, what *AM* I saying... Not stole... Oh, no, no, no, no. Rather when you lovingly adopted an innocent babe...”

“No.” Loki frowned theatrically, crossing his arms and tapping his lower lip thoughtfully with one long forefinger brows lowered.

“Hmmm, not a babe either. Ah...” He spread his arms wide, palms and gaze raised ecstatically towards the ceiling. “When you *lovingly* adopted a twisted monster from a degenerate race of savage animals.”

“Loki,” Odin growled warningly.

“When you brought *that* back with you to Asgard,” The younger god spat glaring at Odin, eyes glittering with unshed tears. “Were those that *spawned* it still alive?” He demanded.

Odin regarded him serenely.

“Loki darling, please...”

“Tell Me!” he screamed, darting forward, palms snapping down to grab the padded arms either side of the chair that Odin was sitting in, leaning nose to nose in Odin’s face.

Thor started, but stopped at a growl from Loki and a small hand wave from Odin.

He felt Starks arm’s wrapping around his waist pulling back on him. “Rock of Ages you need to calm the fuck down. Not that I don’t sympathize with you wanting to scream at Richard III and all, but you really need to chill, all this angst is not good for your mortal body, fuck if I can figure out how you survived it even--”

“My son, perhaps we should finish discussing this later when you have had time to consider it.”

Odin said soothing, riding right over Tony's comment.

"I am *NOT* your son. Tell me now old man," Loki growled. "Whose child did you steal from Jotunheim?"

Odin's expression never changed.

"TELL ME!" Loki screamed once more, a tear finally spilling over to run down his face.

"Laufey." Odin said with a sigh. "You are Laufey's son. You bear his marks. I know them well."

OoooO

Tony wasn't exactly sure what it was about Laufey that upset Loki so much, but he had to admit the name was doing an excellent job at it. Fortunately Loki only had mortal strength; unfortunately in his rage he was still too much for even extremist enhanced Tony to hold. It wasn't that Tony was totally inexperienced; hell he worked out several times a week. However despite Steve's best efforts over the years, Tony did not have a couple of centuries of experience at hand to hand combat, nor did he ever train as a contortionist, acrobat or a ninja.

Loki apparently had.

Tony's sole contribution to keeping Loki from killing Odin was to trip him up, causing the both of them to fall sideways, with Tony landing on top of Loki. Momentarily, at any rate. Screaming what were obviously Asgardian obscenities, Loki eeled out from under him stumbling towards the sideboard.

Thor had several eventful moments deflecting heavy metal jugs, stoneware goblets and a large metal tray that Loki frisbee'd at the All Father with frantic energy. Loki may not have had his godly strength anymore but the force of the frisbee'd tray managed still made Thor shout when it hit his vambrace.

Frigga had thrown herself flat on the couch, out of the line of fire; Pepper stopped the guards from entering to find out what the ruckus was about, slamming the door shut at Tony's shouted command.

"Loki, stop this at once," Odin commanded over Thor's and Loki's shouts.

"You lying deceitful bastard!" the youngest god shouted, tears now streaming down his face. Wrenching open a drawer of the sideboard he looked for something else to throw. "All those years I tried to be a good son to you! All the shit I have had to put up with from the court doing your dirty work!" Spinning back around Loki held a small knife by its blade.

"You. Lied. To. Me." Loki screamed lifting the knife into position, face purple with rage, pupils so large his eyes appeared black.

"I was never your son, I was a hostage!"

Tony, tried to grab Loki's arm, but it was yanked up out of his reach before Loki's elbow descended with speed and force, hitting the engineer so hard he slammed backwards into a mother big candle holder that was taller than he was. Fortunately the heavy metal holder hit the floor before Tony did.

The thrown knife embedded itself into the back of Odin's chair, Thor having apparently realized what his brother had been hunting for in the side board and snatching the king out of harm's just in

time.

“Enough!” Roared Odin.

Glowing gold bindings snaked around Loki’s ankles and wrists, his momentum tripping him forward as the bindings restricted movement of his legs. “Loki, this is enough!” Odin repeated huffily, smoothing out his clothing, looking down on his struggling younger son.

Frigga was down on her knees, using her sleeve to wipe a smear of blood off Loki’s lip, where it had dripped down from his bleeding nose. “Please calm yourself darling.”

“And you.” He hissed, pulling away from her hands and struggling to get onto his knees. “I thought you loved me. If no one else did, I was sure you loved me.”

“Of course--”

“You lied! You claim to love me and you let my whole life be a lie! You are both filthy, dirty--”

Tony yanked Loki backwards by his hair, clamping a hand tightly over his mouth. “And that is about enough of that.” he gasped out of breath, but as conversationally as he could.

“Thor, a little help over here please?” Tony requested as he scooted his back up against the sofa, releasing Loki’s hair and using that arm to haul the struggling bound god to his chest. Loki slammed his head backwards, but he was off center enough that it didn’t impact with Tony’s face. His shoulder however was another story.

“Stop that.” He hissed softly in the god’s ear. “You are in so much shit right now that you just need to stop.”

“Just hold him in place a minute will you?” Tony asked the large blonde.

Waiting until Thor had a firm grip on Loki’s forearms; Tony switched his other hand to cover Loki’s mouth before digging in his pants pocket. It took a couple of tries but he was finally able to extract a small vial from his pants pocket.

Seeing the vial as Tony held it towards Frigga to unscrew the stopper, Loki tried twisting away, but Thor’s grip was too strong for him and Tony kept his hand tightly over his mouth so whatever he was screaming only came out as a garbled mess.

The look Loki shot Tony was like to break the engineer’s heart. It was plain that the god thought that Tony had now betrayed him too by helping them. Loki was screaming and thrashing as they held him down. Every ounce of pain, every wish for vengeance, every bit of frustration as fifteen years of twisted missing pieces and a millennium of lies before that translated into increasingly frantic attempt to twist free of the bonds and hands holding him.

“I was afraid of this, Tony said hanging on the bucking, thrashing god. “Thor hold him down tight him a minute for me.” Loki had screamed into Tony’s palm. Timing it just so, Tony moved his hand, just as Loki was drawing in another breath, tipped the contents into the Trickster’s open mouth before dropping the vial. Before Loki could spit, he forced his mouth closed and used his now free hand to clamp his nose shut. “Don’t you dare try to spit that out. Okay....”

And now had a mouthful of potion and no air, worse Tony’s hand grabbed his injured nose closing off that avenue for breathing. Loki had no choice but to swallow so he could breathe in much needed air through his mouth.

“Okay, you got anything else?” Tony demanded releasing his hold on Loki’s nose so that hand could join in the effort of keeping his yelling muffled too much to be understood.

“Loki doesn’t have a secret twin sister somewhere in court he’s been unknowingly swapping spit with does he?” Tony called out sarcastically. “No? Nothing like that? Well thank god.” At Odin's affronted look he elaborated, “Not you, the big one.”

“Brother please...” Thor said, not the least bit helpfully since the sound of Thor’s voice saying the word brother enraged Loki even more.

As witnessed by his doubling up his legs and kicking Thor in the chest. However his strength had never been a match for Thor’s and it was even worse now that he was mortal. Thor rocked back from the blow but was uninjured.

“It was fortunate Tony that you had a draught on you just in case Loki became--”

“Became what Thor?” The engineer snapped. “High strung?” Thor just nodded. “Seriously? Think a minute dude. Do you honestly think the guy is the way he is because he’s high maintenance? You don’t think maybe it’s because Asgard’s fucked over his whole life?”

OoooO

“You... calm down.” Tony bumped Loki’s side with a knee for emphasis. Loki stopped trying to bore holes into Thor with his eyes and turned his laser glare sideways trying to see if he could kill Tony with a look. It was a valiant attempt at murder, but thankfully even when the god’s powers were at full power, that hadn’t been one of Loki’s talents.

“You have every right to be excited about this, but right now you need to calm the fuck down.” Not releasing his hold on the Trickster’s mouth, Tony’s own head dropped forward onto Loki’s shoulder with a sigh, before he lifted it and nudged the side of Loki’s head.

“You got any more questions?” Loki obviously unable to enunciate past the hand clamped tightly over his mouth just went rigid. “Or maybe you can get a rain check on them, since you aren’t thinking real clear right now? Would that be okay?” That earned Tony a slight narrowing of his eyes, which Tony was going to take as assent whether it was or wasn’t.

Turning his attention away from Loki and towards Odin, Tony asked, “You down with that your kingness? He can submit questions to you later after he’s calmed his shit down?”

Odin’s gave them a slow nod, clearly not used to Midgardians and Jotun adoptees having fits in his front parlor or whatever this room was called in fairyland.

“So now I am going to take Flawed Design here to Midgard and get a couple of healers who use something besides cat nip to look at him.” He gave Loki a shake and Odin a hard look. “I think some of this... evening... might be due to a fairly common mortal medical condition.” He gave Odin a grim dead eyed smile. “But I’m pretty sure most of it was you.”

Ah, well that helped dent that stoic, *‘I Am All Wise’* look off Odin’s face. “I’m also going to call for a quick medical consult. Since Lo here has been good and thoroughly mind fucked this evening I’ll get a shrink recommendation too.”

It wasn’t but another few seconds before Loki’s eyes were drooping a bit, and Tony could feel his heart rate slowing. Frigga tugged Thor out of the way after Tony nodded it was okay for him to let go.

Kneeling beside her son with some of the cloth napkins from the sideboard, the queen dabbed Loki's face as much as she could with him trying to turn it away from her.

"Loki will be taken to the healer's hall; he is not permitted off Asgard until after the binding ceremony." Odin told Tony, motioning Thor to help get his brother off the floor as the gold bindings dissolved into nothingness.

"Pepper!" Tony called loudly, refusing to let Thor move the god of mischief. "Can you be quiet?" He asked nudging Loki with his nose.

Loki flicked him a sidelong stare, most of its power lost as he was having a hard time focusing.

Tony hissed in his ear, hoping his voice was low enough to escape being over heard by the elder god glaring at them. "Seriously, Rudolf, you need to keep your damn mouth shut until we get off this fucking planet and safely home. Can you do that?"

After an angry huff and a begrudging nod of assent, Tony took his hands away from Loki's mouth and let Thor help them up to the couch. He accepted the napkin that Frigga handed him, wiping the blood off of his hands. Loki was rigid under her ministrations, but other than averting his face he didn't say anything as she tried to clean the blood from his face.

"You're helping them." He hissed at Tony with narrowed eyes.

"No, I'm helping you not to get in anymore trouble that you already are. Now zip it."

"Pep, do me a favor and explain to the All King about how the paragraph detailing the care and feeding of magical creatures allows me to take this one home for a few days even if the binding party hasn't happened yet." Loki tch'ed sullenly at the Harry Potter reference but just sat dividing his glaring time equally between Frigga and Odin.

"Well, Mister Stark is essentially correct your majesty. As of the signing of the contracts he has full responsibility and control over the treatment of any illness his spouse is suffering. As your logmar explained several times, the contract signing is when legal rights and responsibilities begin; the ceremony is just a public notification and celebration."

Odin, looked at her steadily, but did not indicate dissent.

"But I am sure that Mister Stark will waive that right if you would like to return Loki's immortal strength and healing powers to him right now." Pepper quirked an inquiring eyebrow at the unmoving Odin.

"No? In that case Tony and Loki can properly seek what care they deem medically necessary. And since mortal medical care for stress related illnesses clearly not readily available here on Asgard, he will have to return to Earth for it where he already has two doctors familiar with his now mortal health issues."

Frigga was whispering something to Loki, but it was too low to Tony to hear. Thor was jiggling back and forth like a kindergarten that needed a potty break and Odin was thoughtfully regarding Tony. But since he hadn't started yelling or calling guards, Tony decided to do a salesman's close and head back to Earthgard.

"Hey Thor, could you please come with us at least as far as Big Fancy Sword Dude?" Tony asked. While Tony was pretty sure Reindeer Games was going down for the count soon, he might possibly catch an adrenaline spike of some sort and get... fussy. Tony doesn't want Loki's bodyguards having to subdue him. Once was more than enough of that, the engineer not wanting to

set any bad precedents for such physical manhandling to be a go-to response for them.

“Come on Pep, it’s been a long day and we still have a long way to go. A really long way. Your Majesty,” Tony nodded at Frigga, “If you could send me a letter with the details telling me who, what, where, when and how on the rest of this production, I’d really appreciate it.”

“Come on buddy,” Tony said hauling a glaring Loki up.

The god was unresisting, but he swayed toward Tony, ducking his head a bit and whispering harshly in his ear, “I’m going to kill you the first chance I get.”

“Yeah, let’s talk about that later, okay?” Tony said dismissively, urging him towards the door and smiling at the ‘rents. “Now say bye-bye to mom and dad and we’ll be heading home for a bit. I’ll try to have him back to you in a few days.... Doctor’s orders permitting.”

Just as Loki passed him, Odin put out a hand stopping Tony, “Thor, please assist your brother and Lady Pepper to Heimdall. Starkson, I would have words with you, please stay a moment.”

Chapter End Notes

As always **comments and reviews are greatly appreciated**, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. May thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Was I or was I not right about how cute and agnsty the Kid Loki fic - Mama do you love me? by masquerade_wolf was??
<http://archiveofourown.org/works/1421566>

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Involuntary drugging if this is a problem for you please don't read it.

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Chatting with the FIL to be

Chapter Summary

Odin is not near as much fun to talk to as Loki is. At least in Tony's opinion... But he shed some light on exactly what the hey he was thinking when he agreed to this whole mess.

Chapter Notes

Okay. Two things.

Second I may be a bit late on Chapter 8 as it is not even started. My interpersonal relationships have been more drama filled than even I can take, so I am moving 1500 miles Monday morning to inflict myself upon a sibling. As you might imagine, my concentration has been pretty crappy for about the last month. I do apologize, I will try to get it finished and beta'd as soon as I can.

This chapter was beta'd by the ever so lovely Mima Mia!

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 7 – Chatting with the FIL to be

After having a hasty word with her husband and directing a tight, grimace-like smile at Tony, Frigga followed her sons out of the room, her rich robes vanishing as she slammed the door behind her.

"So your majesty... Before you get started with what you want, I'd like to know just exactly what did happen on the Rainbow Bridge that last night? Thor says he fell, Eir had hinted it might be more serious and you kind of skated over the whole thing."

Odin waved him towards the chair that Pepper had so recently vacated before reseating himself in his father-of-all-leather-wingbacks. Sitting painfully erect, making Tony wonder if the guy even knew how to slouch, Odin began to *'share'*.

"As both my sons hung over the end of the bridge, Loki pleaded with me for understanding." The elder god's face took on a distant look for the barest instant. "And to my great sorrow, I answered

him with exactly the wrong words.”

Lowering his head in a futile attempt to somewhat mask what a load of bull he thought this was, Tony glanced at the king from lowered brows wondering if those exact words were another thing his Odin-ness had been banking on the memory-wipe thing solving for him.

Odin’s hand clenched briefly for a moment. “Loki told me, pleading for understanding that he killed Laufey and attacked Jotunheim for me, for all of us and that he could have done it.” The older god took a deep breath before continuing. “Made us all safe I imagine. That’s when I said something, that for all my supposed wisdom I should have known not to say. I told him ‘No Loki’.” His lone eye glanced tiredly up at Tony. “Would that any other words would have come out of my mouth but those.”

If Odin was looking for sympathy, he was talking to the wrong billionaire. “You think?” Tony scoffed, not caring if his FIL was an all high magic king or not. “Your kid, who just found out he was adopted, off’ed his biological dad in some sort of harebrained scheme, which makes me wonder just a bit about his supposed genius by the way, to prove his loyalty to you. Then he somehow thought destroying the rest of his own race was what it would take to keep everyone he loved safe and make you proud.” Tony didn’t roll his eyes, but it was a close thing. Instead he snorted derisively, waving his hands theatrically.

“And after all that, ‘No Loki’ is what you came up with? Damn, I thought my dad was a thoughtless jerk.”

As Pepper had often told him, he had no sense of self preservation,

Odin growled. “Yes, I have heard this argument before Anthony Stark, we need not go through it again.”

“Yeah no.” Tony retorted, ignoring the gathering storm on the King of Asgard’s face. “I think maybe you should have to discuss it daily if that’s what it takes to make your son understand that you are an idiot at times too. Like maybe let him know that making bad calls under stress kinda runs in the family or something.”

Odin slumped even lower, “So his mother tells me. Repeatedly.”

“Yeah and while you’re at it, I’ve pumped Goldilocks for background info on O-Shining-Asgard almost since Mrs. O dropped baby boy in my lap all those years ago. Maybe you also need to discuss that whole setting a bad example thing. Like why it wasn’t okay for Loki to do either of those things even though grandfather Borsh decimated one race and Daddy-kins subjugated another one. While I personally think not doing stuff like that is the way to go, I just have to mention that having double standards on this subject is kinda a dick move on your part.”

“You don’t understand--”

“Oh no. I understand just fine. Any idea how many people Thor killed on Jotunheim? Was it more than Loki did on earth? Or do those deaths not count because your adopted son’s race aren’t really considered people?”

Which Tony is pretty sure is the case. *And if that doesn’t that just send Reindeer Games a lovely message I don’t know what does.*

“Which kind of makes me wonder what you consider the people of earth to be.”

The engineer and the King of all Space Vikings studied each other for a long moment. Finally,

realizing that he was not going to get an answer, and if he did it most likely wasn't going to be one he wanted to hear, Tony asked in his best pleasant, 'One hundred percent fake but not openly mocking' voice, "Please tell me you can smell the hypocrisy."

"I am not without understanding on that, but I would advise you to have a bit more care on how you speak to me of these matters," Odin intoned, regarding Tony with a narrowed eye. "And despite my failings as a parent, some of the wrongs Loki did would have resulted in immediate execution if I had not intervened."

"If that's the case then why didn't you let them put him up against the wall? Guilt? Because Thor only got a three day time out for his attempt to start a war? Or was it because the guy had mitigating circumstances out the wazoo when he threw his little temper tantrum?" Tony demanded, pretty sure that it was most likely a combination of the two with a heaping helping of 'don't you touch my baby' from Frigga.

"For all that it is seldom seen, Loki's anger is a thing to be feared Anthony Stark. Please be assured that I don't take it lightly." Odin sighed heavily as those two mother big black birds winged in from one of the adjoining rooms. "Not then, not now. How much or how little his rage had to do with what ultimately happened on Midgard it would be difficult to say for sure."

Do ya think?

"You know if you had left his memories alone, once he calmed down you might have been able to ask him." The engineer pointed out. While it was too early to start cataloging the various looks of irritation he got from the All-King, Tony was a bit surprised at the much more than slightly annoyed look he was getting. Hell, the guy had been brushing off everything he said all night and now he was getting a 'very vexed look'? How fair was that?

"Anthony Stark, while it might alleviate some of the issues we currently have to deal with, trust me when I tell you that Loki would '*never*' rest easy if certain of those memories had been retained."

Tony tries to ignore that little knot of panic that has decided to take up residence in his chest because this is a totally unsettling statement when he thinks of all the horrible stuff they '*were*' willing to admit to his godling.

"So. You didn't just remove those memories, you examined them didn't you?"

The All Father smirked. It wasn't a smirks destined to go down in a Hall of Fame anywhere, but it was a good serviceable one none the less. It had '*smug bastard*' written all over it. Along with a touch of something darker that Tony just can't place.

"Asgard needs a healthy second prince whose interests are firmly tied to the realm. I grow old and tired Anthony Stark and must have him resettled and reformed in the eyes of the realms before Thor has need of him."

Okay. Tony had not seen that one coming.

"For his magic?"

Apparently not. For the record? Tony would like to have it noted that All Powerful Space Alien kings snort. Ruefully perhaps but that noise was still definitely a snort.

"No, although his skills there are quite formidable," Odin rubbed his forehead as if struck by a sudden pain. "In fact it would be so much easier for us all if they were not. However powerful his magic, it is his diplomatic and manipulative skills which are needed. And notwithstanding what he

might say and recent events, Loki has always loved his brother.” Odin inhaled deeply. “Indeed much of my hope hangs upon that affection, particularly now that he is feels that Frigga and I have betrayed him.”

Tony waited in silence, curious to see what other insane hope his Odin-ness might be harboring. Privately? He thought the god was in for a really rude awakening.

It was several more moments before the elder god stirred. Odin’s face creased as he gifted Tony with a regretful smile. “In all honestly, I foresee difficult decades ahead. Loki’s ability to exasperate without bringing wrath down upon his own head is legendary in the realms.”

Heh.

“Well you did dub him the God of Mischief.” Tony offered not really feeling too sympathetic.

“Indeed,” Odin said with the smallest glint of humor finally making it to his pale blue eye, “I only did so because his mother would not allow me to name him the God of Irritation or Annoyance.”

Yeah, that would have went over like a brick balloon, Tony thought as Odin continued his voice sounding more and more tired and resigned. As if he was repeating old arguments for the umpteenth time.

“Loki needs to be settled. He is too powerful a mage to be allowed to remain unaligned. Besides Asgard in general and the royal family in particular, need children of talent, children who can assist not only in the defense of Asgard but also whole of the Nine Realms. The gift runs weak in Thor, and Gungnir can only provide so much power. Should Thor persist in choosing that mortal woman as his queen, there will be little chance that his children would be born with any mage talent at all.”

Okay. Not really something that Tony was expecting, but he guessed it made sense. From years of discussing it with Loki he knew that Mage work apparently was not highly regarded among males in Asgard. Your run of the mill Asgard male was also a bit leery about joining with the more powerful female practitioners of the arts, talented females apparently put up with much less shit than their un-talented sisters. Most males with talent left for less ass-hole-ish realms, taking their potential for kids with them. This left Asgard with a bit of a magical brain-drain problem that Odin apparently intended to fill from the top down.

“Well you and Frigga are both wizards; perhaps it just skipped a generation.”

Pausing for a moment, the merest flicker of time, a one hundred percent certain Odin replied, “No. Unless Thor marries someone skilled in the arts his children will not be talented. One of the reasons I allowed Loki to be joined to your house is that you have a bit of talent about you even though you are Midgardian. Also, despite your less than winning personality you have a great intelligence. If your children inherit even a fraction of Loki’s talent and your intelligence the combination will be, as you yourself have said, formidable.”

Which was nothing that Tony didn’t already know. Hell, any kid he had was bound to be at least scary smart, add Loki into the mix and who knows, they could easily out god the gods. Not that he intended to have kids anytime soon, even if Loki’s babe persona *was* smoking hot.

“So those other women you tried to marry him off to were talented?”

“Not particularly, although some minor talent does run in their family.”

“Geniuses?”

Odin huffed. “No. Definitely not.”

“Then why them?”

“The quantity of grandchildren I could have expected from such a union would have allowed natural selection many, many opportunities.” Odin smiled sourly, “And even those who did not manifest power in this generation might pass the seeds of it to the next.”

Okay.

“Loki did say something about them being from fertile families,” Tony admitted, although privately he had a hard time imagining the Trickster going along with the baby-mill plan to re-establish the Mage pool in Asgard.

“Indeed. Almost abnormally so for the Æsir. I was banking on multiple children to swing the odds of having a really talented one or two being born. Especially since bearing young seems to be a competitive sport in their family.” Odin apparently decided to ignore the face that Tony made, which had been of course complete with Tony’s very own brand of modified eye roll.

“So what’s the other reason?” He asked, trying not to let his impatience to get going show.

Odin just looked at him. Chin raised, face all impassive and kingly. Tony could see where having a father like Odin might have driven the god of fruit loops completely around the bend.

“You said ‘*one of the reasons*’ so there must be more.”

Lifting his head imperiously Odin raised a brow, “Someday soon, you and I will sit down and discuss improvements to various defensive measures. I have seen that you are quite clever in that area.” Cue one wintery little ‘*Odin-smile*’ before the All Father’s voice deepened and got totally ‘*kingly*’. “While I live, he is shielded, but when I pass, Loki’s whereabouts could become known to someone who wishes him great harm. Now I cannot say for sure they will still be looking for him at that time, but it is possible. The entities Loki met in the void are very patient.”

OoooO

Having confirmed stuff that Tony had already suspected about the ‘fell vs let go’ version of the Rainbow Bridge story. His Odin-ness concluded their chat with a quick explanation of how unhappy he was that Loki was leaving Viking land and how displeased he would be if Loki was gone for more than a few days. Not that having the let go part confirmed made the inventor happy, but at least now he and his godling’s ‘*shrink-to-be*’ wouldn’t be blindsided by that aspect of Loki’s mental makeup.

So except for that vague spooky ‘*Entity in the Void*’ thing, which Tony made a mental note to try to weasel a bit more info on from Misses Odin, the whole convo had gone pretty much as Tony had expected. It was about an hour before Tony managed to escape Odin and his freaky birds. Well one of them anyhow.

The Realm Eternal, as Odin referred to it, seriously needed some sort of Bi-Frost shuttle service or something. All this walking was getting on Tony’s last nerve, but apparently the only other remedy was worse. Tony was *not* a fan of horses. So with an escort that included one of those damn birds and a couple of Odin’s big scary guys, Tony made his way to the Heimdall’s causeway. He arrived just as Pepper, Thor, a few of Frigga’s guards and an obviously flagging Trickster god arrived there.

“Friend Tony, I have decided that I will see you all the way home,” Thor informed him in his usual

just twenty-five percent over normal speech levels. Thor's large hand was wrapped around the bicep of a slumping trickster god as he stood there smiling at Tony, completely ignoring the low level growl that his comment provoked from Loki.

It turned out that Thor's idea of accompanying them home was a good one. Heimdall had no sooner disappeared back to Viking Land than Loki's energy levels hit the wall and he collapsed halfway to the terrace doors. Thankfully Thor was there. The big guy picked his brother up as easily as if he were carrying a kid. Freed from having to suit up to get Loki installed in the guest room that used to be his, Tony followed along behind them.

"Thor, are you staying the night?" Pepper asked as they entered the penthouse.

"Sadly no, Lady Pepper. As soon as I have seen Loki safely into bed, I have to return. I have no doubt my father will wish to speak to me."

"Fine. Tony, I'm exhausted. Since Thor isn't going to use it, I'm going to bed down in the main suite on the guest floor. I'll see you in a couple of hours."

"Ms. Potts would you like me to have one of your assistants stop and pick up fresh clothing from your apartment for when you awake." Jarvis inquired.

"Don't bother them Jarvis, I have a few outfits stashed in the closet of my office, just have someone pick one up and put it in the entry hall for me. Oh, and please leave a message for my assistants that I'll see them tomorrow at ten to go over anything I missed. 'Night guys," she yawned, waving as she ducked into the elevator heading down to the main apartment on the guest floor.

It only took a few minutes for Thor and Tony to manhandle the younger god out of his outer clothes and under the covers. Patting the sleeping Trickster's arm absently, an exhausted Tony walked Thor back out and waited just inside the terrace until Heimdall retrieved him. The walk back to his own room seemed to take forever and Tony was asleep almost before his head hit the pillows.

OoooO

Having decided to work in the living room rather than head down to his lab, Tony was able to quickly nip into the Loki's room as soon as Jarvis told him he was waking up.

"Hey Lo. Welcome back to the land of the living." Tony said leaning against the doorframe watching with interest as his long legged Norse god clawed his way back to wakefulness.

"Stark?" Loki asked, looking around in confusion pushing the brown and cream comforter aside still not fully awake. "Midgard?"

Tony smiled. "Ummm... Yeah. Me. Midgard. You've been sleeping for... How long Jarvis?"

"You've slept for thirteen hours and twenty-two minutes Mister Odinson." "Jarvis told him.

"Hel," Loki groaned. Clutching his head, he got up, stumbling into the bathroom with all the grace of a newborn foal.

"So. Jarvis. Get everyone on the horn and see what kind of schedule we can work out with Bruce, Vaslin, Rozmon and Schafer? Hey that sounds like a law firm doesn't it?"

"Indeed Sir. Shall I get Doctor Banner and Vaslin set up for this afternoon and try for early tomorrow with Doctors Rozmon and Schafer?"

“Yeah, that will be fine.” Tony said absently, head bent over his tablet, weeding out his always over-flowing inbox. After a perhaps fifteen minutes he frowned, lifting his head up to look at the bathroom door. “Did he die in there Jay?”

“No Sir.” His AI replied with amusement. “He is currently taking a shower.”

“Oh.” The tip of Tony’s tongue stuck out a moment in thought, and then he shrugged and stood up. “Okay,” His attention already returning to the tablet in his hand Tony wandered back out into the living room to wait for Loki there.

OoooO

“Mister Odinson will be out in a moment sir.”

“Cool. Thanks Jarvis.” Tony put down his tablet on the couch beside him and stretched his arms a moment. Tony’s favorite brown Black Sabbath shirt rode up a bit as he worked the stiffness out of his shoulders. Standing the engineer bounced a few times, rocking back and forth on his tennis shoes to loosen his leg muscles and let his t-shirt and jeans fall back into place.

Looking up as he heard Loki enter the room, Tony’s breezy ‘Hey Lo’ trailed off as he took in the furious scowl directed his way.

“I’m going to guess that someone woke up in a grumpy mood. Yes?” Tony asked making a silly face, trying, not too successfully to lighten the mood. There was as yet no rain or lightning, but Tony could almost see the storm clouds that accompanied the god into the room.

“Sir, Doctor Banner just confirmed that he will meet Doctor Vaslin here at three this afternoon and they both have agreed to a consult with Doctors Rozmon and Schafer prior to their appointment with Mister Odinson tomorrow morning.”

“Umm, Isn’t that a bit long to keep Rudolf here fasting Jay?” Tony asked swivelling to look directly into one of Jarvis’ cameras.

“I did mention it to Doctor Banner, but he has a scheduling meeting he can’t miss, and Doctor Vaslin is not available any earlier but both doctors indicated that they could make it here by three at the latest.” The Jarvis said apologetically. “Doctor Banner did suggest that you gather the samples yourself so the results would be ready by the time they arrived.”

Sticking his lip out thoughtful, Tony nodded. “Okay, that’s certainly do able.”

“Making more plans for my future without consulting me Stark? Please tell me what you have planned next,” Loki snapped, an irritable vision in tailored black slacks and a slim cut white dress shirt. “An appointment to have your name tattooed on my body? Or one to have me fitted with a collar and tag? Or both perhaps so every chance met idiot will know that ownership of my person has passed from Odin to you?”

Okay. So his god was just a bit past the cranky stage. Like maybe a mile or two.

“Well no. Errr... Not that those ideas aren’t both very hot in a more than slightly demeaning way. But we did come down here to see about getting you a checkup.”

“With four doctors? Is that not a little excessive for a few headaches?” asked Loki, more annoyed that the engineer really thought he had reason to be. Maybe it was different on Asgard, but here on Earth almost all of the damn doctors he knew traveled in flocks for Christ’s sake. “Well, it might not be all headaches you know, that why we’re here, to find out what’s wrong.”

Tony seriously considered putting off an explanation about Loki talking to the Shrinks until morning, but he figured maybe it was time to rip the bandage off. “And, the other two are not medical doctors. Umm, they’re head doctors.”

Loki stiffened, obviously confused for a moment, but still very irate.

“Head doctors?” Eye’s narrowing; a muscle started jumping on the side of the god’s clenched jaw. “Do you think me mad Stark?” he asked, his voice tight with anger.

Yeah, that went about as well as expected, Tony thought, trying to come up with a way to phrase his explanation that didn’t cause the dark haired god in front of his to go ballistic. “Ah. No. Not really,” But then before he could stop himself the rest just slipped out. “But you are kinda fucked up in the head. After what you’ve been through. Anyone would be.” The noise that greeted that statement had more than a hint of growl in it.

“Okaaaay. I can see maybe grumpy is a bit of an understatement this morning.” Tony said to the glowering god standing just inside the living room.

“How else would one be after being drugged not once but twice in one night and then waking up somewhere other than their own bed Stark?” Loki spat stalking into the living room. Tony can’t decide if Loki’s movements are more reminiscent of a prowling panther or some large snake. But while his forebrain is trying to work that puzzle, his hindbrain just wants to put some distance between him and the pissed off god. The engineer backed around the couch almost without conscious thought. His hindbrain having obviously won the survival versus curiosity argument is trying to get his body out of the danger no matter what his frontal lobes might have in mind.

“Look, can we just sit down so we can talk about whatever has you wound up? I’m sure together we can work out a fix for whatever it is that’s bugging you.” Hard green eyes locked on to this.

“Oh really?” Loki let out a sharp, almost bark like laugh that was totally at odds with his furious expression. “Like we worked it out together Asgard? Before I even saw you, you had a primary agreement with the queen and without any input from me; you came up with an agreement in principal with the king. I was handed said finished agreement to read and bless. There was no mutual ‘*working out*’ of anything that happened yesterday.”

“Well, technically it was the day before yesterday.” Tony corrected before his brain or sense of self-preservation could stop the words from flying out of his mouth. And because he obviously had a subconscious death wish, he couldn’t help but add, “And besides, isn’t asking the parents for permission the way you royals do it in Viking land anyhow?”

With one of those lighting fast freaking ninja moves of his, Loki leapt the gap separating them and backed Tony up until he was leaning painfully over the back of the couch. His toes barely touching the floor due to the awkward angle, he flailed a moment in an unsuccessful attempt to get his feet back on the ground.

No joy there. Tony then tried shifting a bit to relieve the general discomfort of being his back being hyper-extended but with all the weight from Loki doing almost a full body press he really couldn’t move much.

“How does it feel Stark?” The god growled into his ear, causing a shiver composed of equal parts of desire and anxiety to thrill though Tony’s body. “How does it feel not to be in control of what happens to you?”

“Sir?” Jarvis called out, alarm tinging his voice.

“I got it Jarvis.”

“Are you sure Sir, I could call--”

“Mute Jarvis. I’m on top of it.”

“Are you really Stark?” The god snarled, Loki’s forearm, which had been pressing down on Tony’s chest, slid up to apply a bit of pressure to his throat, the other gripping the hair at the back of Tony’s skull, pulling his head back an angle. “Let’s just see about that.”

Chapter End Notes

As always **comments and reviews are greatly appreciated**, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS
TRIGGER WARNINGS TRIGGER WARNINGS

Involuntary drugging if mentioned. If this is a problem for you please don't read it.

The Missing Years

Chapter Summary

The Missing Years. How Tony and Loki actually hooked back up... before it all went to hell in a hand basket.

Chapter Notes

Okay... So a tiny bit of info repeated, since this is supposed to be a stand alone story. But not too much I hope.

This is NOT the chapter I planned to post next. However with all the crap I have been going through, I flat haven't been able to concentrate on writing for the last two weeks. I can't tell you how sorry I am about that. :(After I decided to post this flashback I got the bright idea to post it separately as a one shot. Then I remembered how well second guessing my self worked the last time I did it, so here it is in the main story as a flashback. Possibly not the smoothest transition but I did try.

Parts of this chapter were beta'd by the ever so lovely Mima Mia! The parts with errors were checked by me and an online proofer.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 8 – The Missing Years

As Loki's hand slid towards Stark's throat the thought angrily crossed his mind there had been a time when there was almost nothing he wanted more than to be reunited with this annoying mortal. And yet right at this moment there was nothing he wanted more than to kill the wretch, and entomb his lifeless body, in the smoking wreckage of overcompensation that was Stark Tower.

Digging his fingers into either side of Stark's throat, Loki demanded bitterly, "How in the Nine Realms did we end up like this?"

OoooO

Since there was no way of knowing when his mother would release him he'd left instructions to keep his workers busy for the rest of the day. He had come back to his room to wash and put on fresh garb. Prisoner or not, one did not visit the Queen of Asgard in creased dirty clothing. Adjusting the plain grey tunic Loki sighed at his reflection, this was a good as it was going to get he acknowledged. Twitching, one last time the cuffs that were beginning to get threadbare Loki turned away from the mirror, picked up a large sealed envelope as he exited his bedroom. He crossed his now empty living chamber in route to the door leading to the hallway. At his nod the warrior at the door opened it and stepped out after checking with his co-workers who had stood in the door way guarding his chambers. Loki followed him out as the exterior guards flanked him in a

maneuver well-practiced by all of them.

As often happened, the guard's footsteps somehow became synced. The noise of their thudding steps bouncing off the marble walls, as it often happened, made his headache throb even more than it had all morning. Fortunately footsteps didn't echo across grass so relief from the lack of noise made it easier to compose a suitable face to show his mother. After a brief pause at the entrance to the Queen's Garden while two of the guards did a quick sweep of the immediate area. Returning, those two forward guards posted themselves outside the gate while their commander entered the garden behind Loki. Stopping a dozen yards away from Asgard's queen, the guard commander was close enough to see him but out of earshot.

The table set with only two visible place settings eased the younger god's tension even more than the respite from noise had. This was not to say that Odin or Thor might not drop in later, but only two place settings greatly reduced the chances of Loki having to deal with either of *'them'* this afternoon.

"Good afternoon Mother," He said, tucking his envelope under one arm and holding out his hands, palms up. Frigga's face lit as it always did when he came to lunch and her eyes searched his face a moment before her shoulders slumped a bit.

"Good afternoon my son," she sighed, placing her hands atop his and drawing him immediately over to the table. "You're not eating again are you?"

He shrugged. As keyed up as he normally was, he ate very lightly at the morning and noon meal, only much as he could stomach without the risk of losing it later in the day. Usually the headache he had by the end of the day made eating his evening meal more a chore than anything else. Not that the food selection provided to the castle's servants made that any easier. If Loki lived to be five thousand he didn't think he would ever be fond of the hearty, greasy fare that was normally provided for dinner to those without the rank to request something different. Seating himself as directed, he simply smiled and handed her the large envelope he'd brought with him.

Hefting the envelope a moment, Frigga she sat it on the table near her plate.

"I understand your father was out to examine the repairs the other day." Figga's voice, light and casual was totally at odds with the penetrating stare she fixed upon him. "I was very pleased to hear that there were no raised voices this time." She waved her hand and several servitors entered the garden bearing trays that Loki's exterior guards had already checked. They both waited until the platters had offered, selections served and then placed on a small side table in case either of them wanted more once the servitors had left.

Loki looked askance at his plate. The lightly grilled shellfish, chicken and sliced vegetables sitting on top delicately seasoned noodles were a favorite of his from his mother's home land, but the amount that he'd been served was far more than he could be comfortable eating these days.

You did see we some very lovely cherry tarts for dessert did you not?" Frigga said disingenuously. Pretending not to notice the look he was giving his plate.

Loki huffed glancing up at her from lowered brows, fighting to conceal the small smile trying to curl up the corners of his lips.

"Really Mother, Don't you think I'm a bit old for you to try to bribe me with dessert if I clean my plate."

"Nonsense," Frigga said airily arranging her russet gown with absent minded pats. "I am your

mother. You will never be too old for me to bribe you into good behavior. Did I mention the tarts were wild cherry?"

Abandoning his attempts to restrain it, Loki allowed the corners of his mouth curl into a rueful smile while he twirled a few noodles on his fork and speared a bit of chicken. He still didn't completely raise his head but he did glance up through his lashes at his mother. "You know there will come a day when even a '*wild*' cherry tart doesn't work mother. What ever will you do then I wonder?"

I will think of something else my son. Never fear."

They ate in silence for a few minutes. Loki spent as much time rearranging his plate so it looked like he had eaten more than he actually was.

"Getting back to your recent visitors," Frigga's voice and glance were both gentle and warm. "Thor was also quite pleased that you allowed him into your chambers to visit last week."

"Did he also fuss to you about having only the floor to sit on and a wall to lean against?" Loki asked for the sake of making conversation only, since what pleased or displeased Thor was of no real interest to him. There was now only one person in Asgard whose approval was even mildly important to him, and hadn't been Thor since shortly after they had left their tutors.

"Perhaps a bit," The Queen remarked with a tiny chuckle. "But in the main he was just happy to have spent the evening with you." She held his eyes for a long moment, amusement fading, her voice and expression becoming more serious. "Thor understands the heavy burden that you carry my son. He does not seek you out to hinder you or waste your time, but rather to try to get you to take a respite, however brief, so that you will not buckle under the weight of your duties."

If she noticed the sheen in his eyes at the thought that anyone would try to lighten, even momentarily, the crushing responsibility he dealt with daily, Frigga had the grace not to allow him to see it.

Remembrance of the nearly impossible job he had been tasked with curdled his appetite. Without conscious thought Loki laid his fork across his still half full plate and pushed it away, ignoring the slightly reproachful look this gained him. Better he should forfeit his tart, than become ignominiously sick in his mother's garden. Besides, he had already eaten more than he normally did anyhow. He glanced fleetingly towards his mother only to find her expression now more thoughtful than disapproving.

"I have been more than a little pleased that you have ceased arguing with your father or driving away your brother. I well know that you do not welcome your father's counsel or your brother's company." Her features tightened. "I do understand that you only tolerate them to please me, since their presence has not brought you true comfort for more than a century." Sighing, Frigga regarded him, pushing aside her own plate. "Perhaps, since your appetite has fled we have already passed time when even a wild cherry tart made a suitable bribe for you? I am not unmindful of the added strain that being civil to your father and brother has placed upon you. And much like your brother, I would like you to have at least a brief respite."

Watching him steadily, Frigga lifted the envelope he had given her when he arrived. "Would you perhaps like the opportunity to deliver this packet to Midgard yourself? Spend a few hours with your former Midgardian hosts?"

Were it not for the fact that it was Frigga speaking, Loki would have suspected that this offer was some sort of cruel jest. Still he wouldn't be himself if he didn't get in at least one jab, "Respite

or substitute for a wild cherry tart mother?"

"Can't it be both?" She answered with a quiet smile.

Loki wondered if she could hear how loud his heart was beating despite his attempt to remain calm. "I suppose that depends what this offer truly is? I cannot accept of course unless I know what you would ask in return for your boon."

"I ask nothing except that you allow yourself to relax for the evening."

Frigga reached out her hand, offering him back his package. His immediate reaction was to instantly agree, snatch up the packet and go see Heimdall immediately. The chance to spend a few hours not being constantly watched and judged would be a balm in and of itself.

However lurking just at the edge of his mind was a niggling fear that perhaps his hastily acted upon plan to retain a secure refuge in case of future need had given Stark false expectations. It wasn't that Loki didn't like the mouthy little smith. He did. But while he had played with the man to the extent that it almost made him blush to think about in hindsight.... Loki had ruthlessly refused to entertain any thoughts about Stark in the way that the man had obviously hoped he would. While a trip to Midgard would be a balm for his spirits, how would Stark regard it?

"Loki."

Aware that he had gotten side tracked in his thinking, Loki shot a sidelong glance at Frigga, hoping that she wasn't aware of 'all' of his thoughts.

"My son. I am sure that Anthony would accept a visit from you as his friend."

Trying to keep his mother from divining his inner thoughts was very often an exercise in futility.

In the end Loki had decided to take his mother's assurance that he would be welcomed no matter what. She was after all the premier seer of Asgard. She might not discuss her foreknowledge, but going against her advice was foolish beyond permission. Loki had no doubt that she had looked ahead to his reception on Midgard before she extended her offer to him.

Frigga escorted him personally to Heimdall. "Enjoy your evening my son," She said, kissing him goodbye. Good Heimdall will return for you in six hours. I will be back here with your guards waiting for you when you return.

OoooO

"Holy shit!" Tony cried jumping over the back of the couch, "Buddy are you alright? What are you doing here?"

When had Midgard become such a refuge? Loki wondered catching his lower lip in his teeth while leaning heavily against the now closed terrace door. The relief he felt at being here surely was completely out of proportion for the brief respite he'd been granted.

"Where's Pepper Tony? I can see it's late. Is she still in her office? I tried to time my visit so she would be, but it's not easy with the time differentials being so fluid." Loki asked trying to speak casually but almost overwhelmed by the need to see the fiery female who had been such a big help to him when he had first come to Stark Towers.

Loki *was* devastated to hear that she was on the other side of the county.

Tony had just stood there watching him, a troubled look upon his face. Loki tugged one of the sleeves of his simple black tunic into place and brushed a hand down thigh of his dark charcoal slacks. Feeling woefully under dressed, as he always felt these days he ran a finger almost nervously over his wide black and green belt which was pretty much the only thing he owned these days that reflected his formerly colors.

“So... new look for you? Or have Asgardian fashions changed?” Tony asked, obviously referring to the lack of ornament or formality his clothing now reflected.

He could feel the blush rising in his face. “Ah, no,” Loki lied, unwilling to admit that he was so shallow that dressing in the simple drab clothing of a servant bothered him. Willing his color down and adopting a small smile he elaborated, “I just find I have no patience for all the layers and stiffness anymore.”

Looking up at the unconcerned, slightly smug mask that Loki had pulled over his tired features Tony racked his brain for something that would get rid of that damn ‘*you can’t see me*’ mask that the god was again wearing.

“Hey!” Tony put an upbeat note in his voice, “I bet we could Skype Pepper in an hour or so when her meeting is done.”

Frowning, Loki’s brows drew together a moment, but then he felt a wide smile steal across his face as he remember how Midgardian used video conferencing. However much Loki would have liked to seen Pepper in person at least Stark proposal would allow him to talk to her and see how she fared now that she had become engaged. Her occasional letter to him had been full of news about this ‘Dale’ person and Loki was curious to see if she looked as happy in person as she had sounded in her letters. He imagined just the fact that she was engaged to someone who wasn’t a trouble magnet had to have been a bit of a blessing for her.

Pulling the god towards the couch, Tony felt his own smile match Loki’s. “Come on, sit down, I’ll have Jarvis order us some dinner. What are you up for? Chinese or Pizza? Or shall we flip for it?”

Loki was certainly not used to anyone casually touching him these days. Baring of course the hug and kiss he received from his mother during their scheduled lunches.

He was at first taken aback at the strange warmth that flooded his chest when Stark tugged on his hand, dragging him over towards the couch. Chasing just a bit more of that curious warmth Loki reached out and pulled Tony to a stop.

Greedily, Loki folded the engineer into a hard hug, laying his chin upon Starks unruly brown hair. For just the tiniest of moments he allowed himself to delight in the almost forgotten feeling of personal contact with someone who was glad you were alive. Control crumbling, Loki closed his eyes willing away the flood of tears that threatened to unman him. He was very glad that there was no way the little mortal could see the struggle it took him to regain some semblance of calm before he spoke again. “Both Stark, I want both.”

OoooO

After deciding that they would postpone dinner until Pepper was free to join them, Loki and Tony started discussing various thought they had on his BiFrost repair project and Tony’s take on Jane Foster’s Einstein-Rosen bridge theories. Working this as a side project, Tony’s progress had been hampered by time constraints, but thanks to the insights he’d gained studying the crystals Loki had smuggled him he’d managed to learn a few things that Jane Foster would have killed to know. But equally important he was able to actually interact with Loki and get a real feel for how it was going

for the Trickster in Asgard. Complete with illusions even, since that was the one power returned to Loki so he could show his workers exactly what he wanted them to do. The images of Odin being outraged at all the re-build information being worked up and kept on a system so archaic that none of it could be ported over to the Space Viking net was particularly amusing. Just in case Odin decided someday to force Loki into handing over the notes they had sent back and forth he and Loki decided on a set of revolving encryption keys.

And if the All Father didn't like it, Loki was sure he didn't care.

OoooO

How in the Nine Realms did we end up like this? Tony was pretty sure that their present differences began with him being a forgetful dick.

When Loki had originally gone back to Asgard there was nothing Tony wanted more than to just get news of how the godling was doing. After hearing nothing from Asgard for a year, Tony's fervent wish was granted when Thor showed up out of the blue to visit Jane and stopped by to renew Tony's rune. Before he left, he agreed to take a small package and letter for Loki back to Asgard.

Thirty days later, Tony had the crap scared out of him by a honking big black guy with weird yellow eyes appearing on his terrace just as he was about to pour a drink.

"Sir, it appears that you have a visitor from Asgard." Jarvis told him as he hurriedly righted the bottle he had just knocked over and threw a towel on the bar to stop his very expensive spilled whisky from dripping down and making a mess on the shelves below the bar.

"No shit Jarvis." Tony grouched heading towards the patio doors at speed. "Maybe a little more warning next time?"

"Sorry Sir, atmospheric conditions interfered with the normal warnings we receive."

"I'm guessing you are Heimdall?" Tony said, holding out his hand and looking up at the huge horned god with the biggest sword that Tony had ever seen in his life strapped to his back.

"Indeed," Boomed a deep voice. Heimdall gave Tony a strange look as he handed him a big, fat parchment-like document envelope which was decorated with numerous seals across the flap.

"And you are Anthony Stark also known as Iron Man. Thor has spoken of you often."

Okay, so Odin was right, Thor had been totally punkin' him with that Man of Iron crap. "So?" Tony hefted the envelope looking up with a raised brow and more than a little bit of a question in his voice. "This is?"

"Queen Frigga of Asgard bade me to deliver that to you and to tell you that should you desire, I will return in thirty of your days for an answer."

Dark hope coalesced with Tony's heart. Queen Frigga had never sent him anything that was more than two sheets of paper in a very small envelope. This thing had to be-- Holy shit Reindeer Games wrote back! While Tony didn't clutch it to his chest like a pre-teen girl or anything, he did tighten his grip and look hopefully up at Tall, Dark and Creepy Eyed.

"Indeed," The giant intoned with amusement tinged the low tones of his speech at the look on Tony's face. "Well Anthony Stark?"

"Well what?"

“Shall I return in thirty days for an answer?”

“Oh hell yeah!” Tony enthused, but then looked with hopeful calculation at the Asgardian. “Unless you want to stick around for an hour or so, have a few drinks and I’ll send something back with you?”

“I cannot be away from my post for that long.”

Of course not, Tony thought with irritation. Got to get back up there and watch everyone like the godly peeping tom creep—

Tony’s weak, but still existing sense of self-preservation kicked in, breaking off bad thoughts about the big sword carrying guy in case he could not only see across the cosmos but also into the heads of people right in front of him.

“Hey! According to Thor you guys really like to drink up there. How about you give me two minutes to go get you a nice thank you present from my bar and scribble a note?”

“A note to Queen Frigga?”

Tony bobbed his head, not agreeing but willing to play along with the charade. “Yeah. Sure. Queen Frigga.”

“Be very fast little mortal, for I cannot tarry longer than a minute or two.”

“Right, fast. Got it.” *Little mortal my ass*, Tony grumbled internally while keeping any hint of that off his face.

Tony darted inside, leaving Heimdall standing on the terrace. With his height and that helmet, there was no way that Heimdude would be able to enter the penthouse without ducking down quite a bit, and he certainly did look like the kind of guy who would bow his head in front of a ‘*little mortal*’.

“Jarvis!” Tony called out worriedly while making a bee-line to the bar, “We got any dead tree leafs sitting around anywhere? And a pen? Pencil? Sharp stick?” Paper was not something that was normally sitting around in his penthouse. It came in to get signatures on it and then left as soon as they were in place.

“In the binder on the lower shelf you will find the restocking checklists that the bartenders use when you have a private party Sir. Pens should be in the miscellaneous supply drawer.”

“Right, Binder.” Tony ducked down scanning the lower shelves and found a large portfolio binder tucked to one side. He snatched two sheets check lists out of it. Flipping one of them over, he yanked open the drawer to get a pen and began frantically writing.

Loki,

I just got your letter but I don’t have time to read it just yet. Heimdude is on a schedule apparently. Fuck if I don’t miss you. I’ll be sure to have a letter here for him when he returns in thirty days. Let me know what kind of stuff your mom will let me send you. Anything. Just tell me. I wish you hadn’t left.

Bruce and Pepper are bugging the crap out of me. Oh and thanks for telling me about Bruce having a girl friend dickhead. How is it that I was the LAST to know?!?!? Miss you. Oh I already said that.

Keep your chin up buddy and tell Thor I'll kick his ass from here to Elfland if he lets anyone hassle you. I gotta go now.

I really, really miss you,

Stay safe

Tony

He hurriedly folded his note into what had to be the ugliest wad of paper that had ever been sent to a member of royalty anywhere. The 'Loki' he scribbled in pen across the front of the folded paper was barely legible due to it being on the printed check list on that side of the paper, but it would have to do. It wasn't like Frigga would give it to anyone else.

Since glue sticks had not played a part in Tony's life since grade school he decided to be very 'Stark' about sealing it his note shut. A quick flick of a handy paring knife and he had carved the front seal off a bottle of Markers Mark 46, another flick and he had sliced it in half. Tony reached into the still open supply drawer and dug out his trusty Bic long reach wand lighter.

Okay. So, once in a while he likes to make a Flaming Asshole when he has guests over, not because he likes creme de bananas or anything, mostly because he likes to watch people's faces when he offers to make them one. And so maybe he had finally learned over the years to stay very far away from high proof liquor when lighting it, especially if he had been drinking heavily himself. This was why he had a long reach lighter available at his bar. That it could alternatively be used to heat up half of a wax seal as it sat on a small metal serving tray was just a bonus as far as he was concerned.

As soon as the red wax started to glisten he turned his note over and pressed the back fold against the warm seal. Using the paring knife to pop the wax off the tray he waved the flame across the front of the wax a moment to soften it before pressing down on the warm wax with his thumb. The pressure made sure the wax firmly sealed the note and it had his thumb print as an impromptu seal. This for the record, while not as fancy as the seals on the Asgardian envelope was still a really clever idea. Even if the wax burn on his thumb hurts like a mo-fo.

Tony made a mental note to design himself a really cool signet ring with a copy of his thumbprint as the seal. Just for laughs mind you.

Pulling the other sheet towards him he frantically scribbled,

Dear Queen Frigga,

You are the best! Really, I mean that.

Please give this note to Loki.

If ever I can figure out something worthy of you, I am totally sending it. You know what, forget that. I'll ask Pepper, she'll know what to get you.

Sincerely, Your Earthgardian Minion,

Tony Stark

He wrapped Loki's note inside of it, wrote Queen Frigga on the outside and sealed it using the remaining half of the wax seal and his other thumb.

Now both thumbs hurt like a bitch.

Snatching up a bottle of *'who knows what'*, Tony ran back around the bar and out to the terrace. "Thanks pal." He panted, no so much from sprinting to the terrace but more from nerves. "This is for the queen, and this is for you." He pushed the note and bottle into the large warrior's hands. "There is more where that came from so let me know if you like it." Heimdall huffed as Tony shoo'ed him back towards the BiFrost pad. "Or if you don't. No problem honest. We'll try something different."

Tony barely stayed on the terrace for long enough to see the light show start before he dashed back inside to open up his envelope from Loki. The contents of which started him on a very strange chapter of his life.

OoooO

Because of Queen Frigga, Tony apparently hadn't aged a day in the last eight years, so while he was technically, as far as the rest of the world knows forty-eight, really he was only forty. Even at forty however, if someone had told Tony that he would have a pen pal he wrote to every day he wouldn't have thought they were insane... He would have absolutely sure of it. But against all odds at whatever age he was now, he did have a pen pal. Not that he regretted it exactly, but at least a couple of times a year he thought how totally 'Summer Camp-ish' it all was.

Tony was never sure what time Mister McFeely was going to power down from Fairyland and pick up the mail. So he had mounted an actual Parcel Post Mail box, a big one, out by the BiFrost landing pad that he could load it up on the evening of the twenty ninth day just to be sure. The small, or sometimes large box was addressed to the Queen but meant for Loki, contained not only his Jarvis transcribed letters but also whatever other goodies Loki had requested or Tony thought the god might enjoy. He also always made sure to put a bottle of something high proof in the mailbox with Heimdall's name on it.

Yeah, the thirty day thing created a bit of time slip but Tony had a countdown app on his desktop and phone. Even if he was out of town, Jarvis would prompt him for the day's letter. Jarvis also made sure they were printed and placed with whatever else Tony wanted to send that month and actually made it to the mail box on time. Truthfully, Tony had been pretty proud of himself. He almost always sent thirty letters, even if he sometimes had to dictate one in the morning and one in the evening to make up for the days when time slipped by or he was recovering from a hangover or something.

As a joke, Tony had ordered a seal with his finger print pattern on it, but he had also had one made that mimicked his arc reactor and always used both of them every package. So far as either of them could tell the queen had never opened any of their envelopes or packages.

Loki had repeatedly assured Tony that she wouldn't. But even so Loki said that he had told her the joke about them wishing they had thought to prank Thor by packing embarrassing stuff, just as insurance against maternal snooping.

Thanks to Asgardian envelopes being some sort of hard material that mimicked stiff sheepskin the god also smuggled several items out of Asgard with his letters. Bits of metals Tony had never seen and even largish pieces of crystal.

Receiving the crystal had floored him.

He, Tony Stark of Earth, had shards of the opal-like crystal that were scavenged from the actual space flinging rainbow bridge itself. Crystals that changed color in the presence of vibrations and

enhanced electric-fields and were so cool it almost killed Tony to keep them a secret.

Loki occasionally also included notes or small gifts for other people. Bruce said that Loki had twice sent him a handful of seeds in his letters and once Pepper received a letter with a few pressed maple-like leaves for that were a deep scarlet with golden shimmers that almost seemed to dance on the surface.

Then one day in early December, with absolutely no warning the god himself had shown up. Loki's first visit back to Earth came not quite two years after he had left. Instead of a letter, Frigga had shipped a thin, obviously stressed god down for a six hour visit. From the conversation during that visit, Tony guessed that her allowing Loki to briefly slip Odin's leash was equal parts reward for Loki not fighting with Odin and stress relief for the overwhelming job the godling had been saddled with. BiFrost rebuilding apparently not being for the faint of heart and all that.

As heart breaking as it had been to see the Trickster looking so thin and weary, the god had perked up after hours of tech talk with Tony and a video conference with Pepper while they all chowed down on the god's favorite Pizza and Chinese dishes. That was the visit that he had hooked the god up with a few easily concealable mini-recorders and a shit load of high capacity micro disks.

While they had still exchanged letters after that, their main form of communication switched to file dumps, evening vlogs, and the occasional sneakily filmed guided tour. The head honchos at SWORD would explode if he knew the treasure trove of other worldly information Tony got as Loki roamed the palace and his worksite, explaining, expounding and snarking under his breath to the super sensitive microphones. In addition to editing and distilling for both of them, Jarvis also key worded Loki's discourse as it came in so that if Tony asked a question, Jarvis could look ahead to files not yet viewed or check in those archived and play any sections that pertained to Tony's question.

Just to be funny, Tony had Jarvis edit their recordings into a reality program that Tony had named the 'The Billionaire and the God'. Tony'd even worked up a logo, synthesized a cheesy theme song and put together an intro as his contribution to the show. Once Loki had stopped bitching about not being a Kardashians he had admitted that it was pretty funny and had sniped back and forth with Tony about who got top billing. The engineer was of the opinion that Loki could be as pissy as he wanted to be, but so long as his AI was the one editing the raw footage, then Tony's name would be first. And despite the almost overwhelming temptation to do so, Tony had not posted any of the episodes on YouTube.

Yet.

So now, despite his age, Tony did not only have a pen pal, he also had an invisible friend that he talked to during the course of the day while he was working or traveling. A habit which had garnered him the occasional odd look for sure.

Bruce on observing the extent that the two of them were tailoring their communication told Tony the whole relationship was becoming freakily strange and that Tony needed to get a real life.

Now that Bruce had a steady girl he was going to tell other people how to live? Tony thought during one of these occasions. He didn't even try to hide his eye roll.

"I don't need a life; I need a fucking Einstein-Rosen bridge." Tony had snapped.

"Well good luck with that," Bruce replied with a smile, pushing his glasses up. "Oh, Janice said to tell you we'll be attending your Christmas party next week." He made a little *'what can I say, the little woman wants to'* face.

Tony wanted to laugh. You would think Tony had invited him to assist in the digging of a sewer ditch and not to one of the most sought after parties of the year.

“Don’t look like that Brucie, it’ll be fun. You know you want to be there. Captain Fuddy Duddy will be there, so you can hang out with him, and there will also be a couple of venture capitalist attending. Have Pepper hook you up with them. Maybe you can scare up some funding for your senior student’s study projects.”

OoooO

After Loki had left the months leading up to first Christmas party hadn’t been too bad for Tony, other than him feeling like shit and being devastated. And drunk, and in denial, and coping okay but not very well, just to cop a phrase from Barry Manilow. But then he’d had the visit from Loki and things had gotten a lot better. Not great, but tolerable.

This year, what with the monthly communications between the two of them it had been a lot better. Still not great, but as well as could be expected for someone who’s best bud slash lab partner was reduced to the status of pen pal and long distance collaborator, emphasis being on long distance of course.

So all in all, while still a tiny bit down, Tony was kinda looking forward to this year’s Stark International Christmas Party.

He got to make Pepper happy by playing nice at her party and have a chance at finding a companion for the evening... All without leaving the comfort of his tower.

Did it get any sweeter than that? No it did not.

And talking about sweet... Tony's attention was drawn once again to the numerous couples currently dancing.

Make no mistake; Tony Stark appreciated a well-built rack and lush curves. However there was also something absolutely mesmerizing about the lean bodied brunette he watched swaying smoothly from move to move out on the dance floor.

And so was.

Mesmerizing that is.

Chapter End Notes

In apology for this not addressing the cliff hanger, I will be posting another (somewhat smutty) chapter of the missing years tomorrow night as soon as I go over it one last time. (Not that I think that will help)

As always **comments and reviews are greatly appreciated**, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Sky's the Limit

Chapter Summary

Tony poaches Captain America's date. Kinda.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Summerlove_jls, although I did have to tweak it to get it to fit here... So any errors are mine sadly. :(

This was an early attempt to write smut, or perhaps I should say smut-lite. If this is not your bag of tea you can skip it with out loosing anything but a bit of backstory. On the plus side I think I've found a way to tie this fluff into the cliff hanger... so yay us!

P.s. I did try really hard for explicit, but I just didn't make it. *le sigh*

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 9 - Sky's the limit

Tony had vaguely noticed the woman earlier when she had persuaded Steve ‘the perpetual wall flower’ Rogers to dance with her. Not that a lot of women hadn’t tried that, but the fact that she had succeeded is what first made Tony take note of her. She had long chestnut curls, a huge wide smile, gorgeous cheek bones and her eyes, what you could see of them under her thick fringe of bangs were done up all sultry-smoky. Over the course of the next hour while he made nice with the various people Pepper presented to him, Tony had caught occasionally glimpses of her dancing, several times with Cap’n Spangles.

Dancer chick’s black couture halter dress wasn’t particularly short or revealing but it did hug and accentuate everything the woman had to offer. Tony had in fact several times absent mindedly admired her ‘*lines*’ as the thin dress material flowed over that pert and nicely shaped ass before stopping at mid-thigh. Those ‘*lines*’ continued down delectably sheer black sheathed legs to a killer pair of black blinged out ‘Fuck Me’ pumps. Her heels made her almost as tall as Rogers, who was laughing at something she was telling him. The clear crystal studded heels of her shoes were the only bling she wore, not that Tony thought that this chick needed sparklies to help her stand out or anything.

Pepper elbowed him just a bit harder than necessary.

Frowning and dragging his attention back to his CEO Tony demanded in an harsh undertone, “What?”

There wasn’t anyone standing with them so it wasn’t like he was rude to a guest or anything. What

the hell was Pep's problem? Tony discretely rubbed his abused rib.

"You weren't paying attention, I've told you three times we're done here," Pepper hissed while smiling at various passersby. "You can finally go and disappear like you wanted to."

"Yeah?" Tony snarked back out of the side of his mouth while also smiling at the passing crowd. "And I've told you a million times not to jab me with that damn sharp elbow of yours and you never pay attention to that."

"Whatever Tony." Pepper waved a hand airily. "You are now free of your official duties for this evening. I only ask that you don't get drunk and cause any problems."

"Actually Pep," Tony said, smoothing his suit and adjusting his cuffs. "I think I'll just go over and chat with Steve for a while."

Pepper glanced around a moment until her eyes lit upon the super soldier and his current companion. Understanding blossomed. "Well just play nice Tony. Remember, no causing any trouble tonight."

"As if I would Pep." Tony said sliding quickly away before she changed her mind about releasing him.

Snatching up a drink from a passing waiter, he waltzed over towards Rogers.

"Spangles! Glad you could make it." Smiling warmly he held out a hand to Dancer Chick. "Don't leave on my account. So Steve, please introduce us."

Sky, which was the only name offered, although she did later claim that her last name was Smith, peered down at Tony from underneath thick dark brown bangs, revealing a gorgeous pair of wide blue-green eyes. Steve introduced Tony, and Sky gifted him with a wide teasing grin that so captivated the inventor it took every ounce of will power he had to ascertain that she was merely chance met, and not in fact Steve's date for the evening. Not that he would have necessarily stopped in his pursuit of her. Since she was in fact companion free the billionaire immediately asked her if she would like to dance. Not amazingly, since he was a billionaire, she agreed.

OoooO

Tony thanked whatever gods were listening that his party had been held in his own Tower this year, and not some other venue. If it had taken even two more minutes to get to his private elevator he would have just slammed his hottie up against the wall and started feeling her up in front of the entire room. Even so, they almost didn't make it. The playboy knew he had definitely run hard hands down over that luscious ass of hers before the elevator doors closed. And as he had suspected, since her thin black dress didn't leave a lot to the imagination, in addition to the bra she wasn't wearing, Sky didn't have any panties on either.

This might have been when he moaned. Fortunately, the doors *'had'* closed by the time he buried his face against her neck and run his hands back up her lace stockings. Rucking her dress up almost to her waist, Tony couldn't help but run the palms of his hands up the backs of her legs and over her sculpted ass.

Moaning, Sky snaked her long arms inside his opened jacket, melting into him more than he thought possible, her one hand pressing against the middle of his back and the other sliding down to nestle right above his own ass, firmly tucked inside the waist band of his slacks.

Taking another nip, Tony felt his lips curl up into a ridiculously self-satisfied smile. Fuck if this

didn't feel more right than any one night stand he'd had in years. Pulling her tight against him, Tony rubbed his hips against her and was rewarded with tiny breathless whines that sent heat curling straight to his belly. When panting, Sky arched her head back allowing him to trail more hot kisses across her throat and jaw line, he felt the sensation move a little lower.

At some point in time, without Tony pressing any buttons or telling Jarvis to take them to his floor the elevator finally began to move. It hadn't been much of a lurch when the elevator started, this was his building after all, but apparently there was just enough movement to cause Body Beautify to open up her stance a bit for extra stability.

Tony couldn't resist, one hand trailed down Sky's ass, chasing the shifting of those taut muscles and found that the insides of those long legs were now fully accessible. Wearing heels made her taller than he was, so Tony was easily able to curl his fingers into the warm gap between her thighs. Pressing upwards, just a bit, rewarded was him with a gasp that changed almost instantly in to a throaty growl. Sky pushed purposefully backwards with a little wiggle nestling herself firmly on his hand.

Oh fuck yeah.

Again Tony buried his head against her neck breathing deeply, taking in her heady perfume of arousal. Using his other hand, he pulled her tighter against him creating the most appreciated pressure on his own very prominent erection. How long they stood there rocking against each other while glorious jolts of sensation shot through their bodies Tony couldn't say. Eventually he did notice that the elevator door had opened and his penthouse, with hundreds of eminently fuckable surfaces, beckoned him.

"Sky, sweetheart, come on, we're at my floor." Tony said trying unsuccessfully to pull away, amazed at how strong she was. He nudged her, lifting his head to look into her unfocused eyes.

No help there apparently.

When he tried to shift them toward the door he found their positions suddenly reversed and he was now the one pressed up against the elevator wall. Her right hand was no longer under his jacket; it was now sliding up past the nape of his neck and clutching the hair at the back of his head. Pulling on his hair Sky tugged his head back and then lowered her lips for another mind-blowing kiss.

"Swee--" Tony didn't get to finish as the moment he opened it the most sumptuous pair of lips he'd enjoyed in long while took complete possession of his mouth. Her tongue slid right in, silencing him with a series of tiny heartfelt moans.

Tony had thought that the kisses they had snuck during the party were pretty hot, but he now had a whole new standard. He hadn't been kissed with this much passion and authority since...

Well since then.

Almost as if his partner had sensed Tony's instant of inattention, her tongue retreated, gently tracing the edge of Tony's front teeth on its way out so that it could softly slide over his lips. Her own teeth now lightly tugged on the playboys lower lip. Teasing his mouth open again and making the most delightful little noises as her lip danced against his. Between the kisses and the stuttering, almost involuntary rocking of her hips as she pressed her fold against his hand Sky managed to chase every single thought that wasn't about her right out of out of Tony's head.

Between the kissing, his own aching cock and the increasing slickness of Sky's tight pussy; Tony

thought he was going to lose his mind. The only thing standing between him and complete bliss was a pair of boxers and the finely worsted wool of a pair of custom tailored slacks.

Well that and the fact that he was still standing in an elevator. His private elevator controlled by Jarvis thankfully, but still not the place to be going much further when there were several other people in the building who were authorized to call for it.

So yeah, possibly not a good idea to linger, what with Jarvis's occasionally perverse delight in obeying authorized overrides no matter how much it embarrassed Tony. For all he isn't human, Jarvis could be a real prick sometimes. Something that never ceased to puzzle him since, A. Jarvis didn't have one and B. Tony '*knows*' he never coded that behavior into Jarvis' programming.

But whatever. Pissy Jarvis was a problem for another day and so those thoughts merely skimmed through the background noise of Tony's consciousness. They then fled altogether as the majority of the playboy's thought processes were almost shut down when Sky's soft hand found and began stroking his cock with insistent and very authoritative strokes.

While Tony was normally the one driving, occasionally allowing someone else to take the reins was totally fine with him.

Occasionally.

And just don't get me started on the topic of how hot handcuffs and silk scarfs could be, he thought.

A dark shiver of remembrance for times past ran through him. Sky to let go of his hair and chased the tremor down his back while a naughty chuckle escaped her. Tony gasped as she twisted her hand just so, her clever fingers tugging gently on the head of his cock in a way that made Tony want to raise up on tip toe to chase the sensation.

So he did.

Several moments of lip locking later, in danger of passing out from lack of oxygen, Tony wrenched his mouth away from hers, moving both his hands to her hips. He glanced up in time to see a frown pucker her brow as he moved his right hand from her clit to her hip. Her head dropped on his shoulder.

"Tony," She protested petulantly, pressing hard against him, flattening him against the wall.

Tony made another unsuccessful attempt to push away from the wall towards the beckoning penthouse. When that didn't work he decided to put a little bit of his '*extremist enhancement*' into it, finally pushing her off of him.

Sky's eyes flew open locking on his in confused surprise, looking more green than blue in the soft amber light of the elevator.

"You dancers are strong, but I am Iron Man," He told her with a lopsided smile backing her towards the hall way leading into his room. "It's not all the suit you know."

Purring with that liquid chocolate voice of hers Sky replied, "I am not a dancer, but I can't wait for you to show me how strong Tony Stark really is even without his suit."

To add to the incredible scrumptiousness of her voice, her accent sinfully tingled its way to various important nerve groups in his body. Those feelings were more than enough to distract Tony from wondering about the devilish little smile she was giving him as he chivied her down the hallway. A

moment later Tony noticed with surprise that he was no longer slowly pushing her towards his bedroom, rather she towing him towards it at an ever swifter pace.

Glancing behind her a time or two so she wouldn't walk into a wall, Sky towed him into the bedroom and over to his bed, swinging him around at the last moment so she could press him down on the dark grey duvet.

Tony reached out and pulled her down with him, her delicately scented curls tumbling all around them as he nuzzled her neck, again breathing in the intoxicating smell of sexual arousal mixed with Sky's own clean scent of winter rain. Tony was *'not'* a freaking teen-ager anymore, but as he kissed her jaw line ghosting his mouth down to her delicate collar-bone, the temptation to mark this woman was so over overwhelming he had to force himself not to.

But I want to, inner Tony whined.

He wanted that so much that it completely took him by surprise, since marking casual lays was not something that Tony Stark ever did.

Somehow, Tony wasn't sure how, since he had a tight hold on Sky's bare ass with one hand and her waist with the other, his tall leggy minx wiggled out of his grasp and stood up again.

"Oh no Tony. You shall not have it that easily," she said trailing a long finger lightly down his chest and over the twitching bulge in his pants. She then crawled off of him with a wide saucy smile as she backed away a few paces from the bed.

Tony raised up on his elbows watching her. She lifted a brow inquiringly, as if to ask if he was paying attention, before stretching her arms up towards the ceiling and then bringing them down on either side of her head. Sliding her hand beneath her hair she lifted it. Sky closed her eyes as she turned her face to the side, granting the playboy an excellent view of her profile before letting her now unruly curls tumble back down.

Glancing at Tony with hooded eyes, she gave him a small knowing smile. The playboy sat up on the edge of the bed, puzzled by the strangely sly expression on her face. Before he could wonder too much about it, her hands were un-fastening the wide cloth collar holding dress's halter top in place. Completing that task those delicate pale fingers started gliding down around her breasts, meeting on her sculpted stomach before continuing down to dip into the hollow between her legs. She stopped there for one breath catching moment as delighted shiver seemed to run through her. Biting her lower lip her hands resumed stroking downwards until they reached the bottom of her short black dress.

Where they paused.

Watching him intently from beneath her lashes she slowly pulled the dress up and over her head before tossing it to a nearby chair. Sky spread her feet slightly apart and folded her hands behind her back standing before him in all of her glory.

His breath catching and his cock twitching, Tony feasted his eyes on the sexiest parade rest he'd ever seen. Her toned and sculpted body was like a Victoria's Secret runway version of Aphrodite, but better because there weren't any annoying bras or panties interfering with his view. Instead it was just Sky in sheer black thigh highs and Fuck-me pumps, standing there like a pale answer to his every prayer.

Tony was more than ready to spend the rest of the night worshipping her.

After giving him a long moment to look his fill, Sky turned her back to Tony. Lifting one foot, then the other she took her high heels off. With a saucy look over her shoulder she bent over sliding her fingers under the top of one of her stockings. A view of her backside that left nothing to the imagination.

Tony mentally uttered heartfelt thanks at the spectacle of Sky's pert ass being displayed for him. Even if the sight was causing him physical pain due to his pants not being near loose enough for his growing erection.

"Hey Sexy," Tony commanded hoarsely, "Losing the heels is fine but let's keep the nylons."

Patting her stocking back into place the brunette again looked at him over her shoulder, an amused brow lifted at neediness of his tone. "I had plans for my nylons Tony," she said running the tip of her tongue over her lower lip.

Tony moaned thinking of all the places he wanted that tongue to run.

"If you insist however."

Tony's breath hitched as Sky bent lower running her hands slowly from her ankles up her nylon clad leg, needlessly smoothing the sheer material before finally standing back up and turning to face him.

Beckoning her over to him, Tony patted his knee.

"I've always been attracted to women like you," Tony said as if telling a secret. He pulled her to stand between his wide spread legs and placed his cheek against her toned tummy, running his hands gently from mid back to her lower thighs. She delighted him with how she leaned into his touch almost greedily.

Moving, she somehow ended up straddling him, one stocking clad knee on the bed, her other foot still on the floor. Holding herself up off of his lap she bent down to whisper in his ear.

"There are no women like me Tony." She said almost sadly.

Tony's thoughts froze for a moment while her tongue delicately outlined the shell of his ear. He tried to consider why that statement seemed to clamor for his attention, but a series of small nips on his neck made him lose all interest in trying to puzzle out anything more complicated than how quickly he could get his pants off.

Unfortunately the hottie straddling him was currently more interested in getting his tie undone. "Since you wanted me to keep my nylons on, I am afraid your tie will never be the same again." She said nipping at his lower lip. "I do hope it wasn't one of your favorites."

"It's a Cavalli," He replied automatically, looking up to find her regarding him in an almost overpoweringly possessive manner.

Sky looked at Tony like he was the most important person in her world. And while he normally he did not relish that kind of intensity from his one night stands Tony would be damned if he wasn't finding it to be the hottest thing he'd experienced in forever.

"Which means nothing to me," She cooed, wrinkling her nose adorably before leaning down to kiss his. "All I care about is that it's soft and strong and will look so pretty tied around your wrists." Her lips moved down and found the corner of his mouth. "And look, you have the perfect head board."

She slipped the tie out from beneath his collar, threading around her own neck so that the loose ends hung on either side of her small breasts. Hot breathy kisses peppered his face while slender fingers made quick work of getting his shirt unbuttoned. "I do think nothing says adventurous male like a wrought iron headboard. Look at it, so many lovely secure places to wrap a tie around."

Tony hadn't picked out his headboard, an interior decorated had, but those same thoughts '*had*' crossed his mind when he approved its purchase.

"So you intend to tie me up and have your wicked way with me?" He asked face crinkling up in amusement. "I could be up for that."

A laugh trilled out. "You could, could you? Well I do promise to make sure you are '*up for that*' for a very, very long time. Perhaps even longer that you think possible."

Sky returned to kissing him, "And you will enjoy."

"Every."

"Single."

"Minute," her soft kisses punctuating each word.

Her last feathery kiss was placed on the corner of his smile as she looked down at him.

Tony was not adverse to her proposed course of action. Quite the opposite in fact, but he also wanted to see if perhaps his own game was good enough to distract her from it.

"Sounds great," He huffed, stroking his hands down her sides while he stretched up to plant a few soft kisses of his own. "But I gotta warn you just in case you decide to tie me up and ransack the joint, my security is pretty good."

"There is nothing in the..."

Sky stopped a disconcerted expression flashing across her face for the briefest of instants. Blinking, she shifted against him, her small breasts distractingly within the reach of his mouth, "There is nothing in this '*tower*' that I want more than what I already have laid my hands upon." She assured him.

Sky moved back enough to undo his pants. She had no sooner undone his zipper when Tony decided he had had just about enough of being patient. Holding firmly onto her hips he pushed her back up to her feet, stood up and twisted quickly, tossing her to the center of the bed.

Ignoring her undignified squawk of protest Tony quickly dropped his pants, taking only a second to also remove his boxers and shoes. Yeah, so he was still wearing his socks. Sue him.

He all but dove onto the bed, landing with a bounce beside Sky's pale figure.

"Gotcha!" The playboy crowed wrapping his arms around her waist just as she starting to scoot away from him.

Her delighted shriek at being manhandled back towards the center of the bed dissolved into giggles as he pinned her in place with his arms and legs, stopping her halfhearted escape attempts. And not incidentally pressing his almost painfully hard length against her thigh.

"Before you use this," Tony nosed his tie lying against her neck, "And show me your moves, I

need to show you a few of mine.”

While they never did get to the main event, Tony did use his hands, lips, teeth and tongue to the point of her repeatedly screaming ‘Stark’ loud enough for them to hear her in Brooklyn.

As for Tony? He was of the firm opinion that Santa had totally delivered for him this year.

Chapter End Notes

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *contain * -
Mature Subject Matter ,& F/M sex. If this is a problem for you please don't read it.
Most of it will not be graphic except maybe the smut if I can manage it, but some
areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if
you will have issues with any of these items.*****

Is it Christmas again?

Chapter Summary

Jarvis totally falls down on the job while Tony ponders the meaning of the holidays and has fun playing party games... or rather 'after party' games.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Mima Mia and after I added 2K and had to totally rework it my savior in a far away time zone Stella.

As I mentioned previously I was kinda thrown for a loop when my life went to hell. I had to relocate on the other side of the country and I just couldn't concentrate on writing. Since this arc was mostly done... I decided to toss it in here rather than have a month or so gap of no story at all.

But on the plus side I did think of a way to tie them into the fight the guys were having. Another plus is I have about three thousand words of chapter 11 finished which will circle around to where we left off for chapter 12 of which I have two thousand words finished. So I am moving again, scattered attention span fighting with remodeling projects to get settled into the new place perhaps, but at least thinking of the story and not stalled thank god.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 10 – Is it Christmas again?

The older you get, the faster Christmas comes each year, Tony mused. It seemed like the decorators had just plucked the mistletoe down from his ceiling and now it was fucking Christmas again. Not that it really mattered so far as Tony's day to day activities went, still it was the principle of the thing.

Once Pepper had moved up to CEO, Tony had simply put Jarvis in charge of Christmas gift buying, which the AI did superbly by simply doing a running check of everyone's internet history files throughout the year. While this was possibly more than a bit stalker-ish, it did enable Jarvis was able to come up with spot on suggestions for everyone on Tony's gift list, with one notable exception this year.

Frankly, the inventor could have lived without seeing some of the ideas Jarvis had come up with for Harley. Reviewing the suggestions, Tony hoped the damn kid's hormones settled down soon. But no matter what the kid 'wanted' for Christmas, what he was getting was a totally kitschy

'Framed and Personalized World Traveler Map' to hang on his wall. Along with of course a bunch of travel vouchers so he could make use of the little 'I've been here' pins and mark the map up accordingly. And what vacation gift package would be complete without the latest Stark Phone with an upgraded camera and memory so he could take enough vacation pics to bore his family and friends to tears with.

Oh and a bottle of Dalmore Grand Reserve to share with said friends and incidentally celebrate his first Christmas of being legal.

"Sir, are you quite sure whiskey is an appropriate gift for Young Master Harley?" Jarvis asked disapprovingly.

"Just get it Jay," Tony said wryly and moving down to the next set of suggestions on the list. "After some of the crap you came up with for the kid, I don't think you have the moral high ground on this one." Jarvis' silence was admission enough to Tony that the AI knew he'd screwed up for once.

After making final choices of for everyone else on his list... including a pink tutu for the apparently impossible to kill Nicholas 'Yeah I'm too bad assed to stay dead' Fury, Tony begrudgingly trudged upstairs to get ready for tonight's annual Stark International Christmas party.

OoooO

The short, lusciously rounded chick talking to Steve looked adorable, even from across the room. She had the sweetest heart-shaped face, wide leaf green eyes and a cloud of short black hair in a tousled Japanese pixie cut. She wore a short black sleeveless skater dress with black fingerless gloves that went up past her elbows and a pair of black heels with double ankle straps. The only thing keeping her from being the hit of any Anime Convention of your choice, were the missing whiskers and a cat ear headband.

All in all, not what Tony normally was attracted to.

However, there was something about the way she crinkled up her face in concentration and the adorable wide smile she gave the Steve that struck a chord in Tony, drawing him closer to the pair almost against his will. As he approached them he noticed with amusement how much her rhinestone necklace resembled an anime styled animal collar. It surprised Tony that there wasn't a little jeweled name tag hanging from the front as a finishing touch, but he supposed that would have been a bit too much for this venue. Not that a grown woman in the juvie attire she was wearing wasn't already pushing that boundary.

Of course Tony also couldn't help thinking that a the dangling jeweled name tag would have been helpful, since it would have allowed him to find out her name and approach her directly. Instead he wasted forty minutes trying to wend his way through crowds of people who all seemingly decided that they absolutely had to talk to him 'for just a second Mister Stark'.

Yeah. Right. Predictably there wasn't a one of them that Tony had wanted to talk to.

"Heya Steve." Tony greeted the tall blonde, having finally made his way over to him.

Tony gestured towards the goth pixie, a short distance away in a group that now included Pepper. "What's with the Cosplay Princess? One of your fangirls?"

Steve frowned at Tony for bringing up a part of modern hero-ing that the solider could have very well lived without. "Not that I'm aware of Tony, or if she is a fangirl that is, she didn't mention it."

The tuxedoed icon answered with a mildly puzzled expression, no doubt due to Tony's reference to cosplay.

In Tony's opinion, Steve didn't look nearly as cute as Pixie Chick did when he scrunched up his face. "So what did you and Neko Chibi talk about?"

"I thought her name was Lyra?" Steve's brows furled a bit more and he looked down at his shoes a moment. "Lyra Walters? No. Winters? Walker. Lyra Walker she said," He shrugged and looked back up at Tony. "She was asking me about my preferred medium for drawing and if I ever thought about going into art full time." Steve's expression became almost sheepish, a half-smile crooked on his face. "You know, normal conversation stuff that normal people talk about. Since she wasn't fussing at me about 'Captain America' like half the women here, I asked her to dance." His smile widened into a big grin, "She's quite the dancer. Afterwards she asked me to introduce her to Ms Potts."

And she must have been a very good dancer, Tony had thought earlier when he'd noticed them twirling around the floor, surprised at how relaxed and smooth Captain Spangles had looked. Steve was still pretty stiff when he danced. At first it had been from lack of experience, but now it was usually from Rogers' apprehension at the predatory nature of modern females. They were sometimes so bold it was a wonder that Steve didn't walk around constantly clutching his pearls.

Musical peals of laughter wafted over to them from the Pepper's group.

"Huh. Well that's great. Enjoy yourself buddy," Tony absent-mindedly patted Steve's arm, ignoring the knowing look he was receiving as he drifted away towards the nearby females.

It took him maybe another fifteen minutes to detach Pixie Chick from Pepper's orbit, but was well worth the effort. Lyra Walker, it turned out, was a funny, sassy, bubbly, little ball of energy. She was so energetic that when they weren't dancing, laughing or drinking, she literally bounced at his side, apparently unable to stand still even for a moment. It wasn't until much later when he pinned her up against the atrium balcony's glass railing that he could finally get her to stand still.

"Are you always like this?" He asked in amusement when after a moment she began to squirm in his arms, turning to face him.

"Like what? Pinned up against a railing unable to move by a handsome billionaire? While on a private balcony overlooking one of the best parties in the whole city?"

"Yeah."

"I wish." She retorted, grinning up at him before stretching her arms up and arching backwards over the railing.

"Whoa there Pixie," Tony cautioned as he let go of the glass on either side of her and instead wrapped his arms tightly around her waist. "And that's the best party, not one of the best."

"Well it is a Stark party, so I guess it would have be," Lyra said with an adorable little smirk before confiding to him, "I'm not worried. I know you would never let me fall." She lowered her arms and threaded her hands behind his neck, tugging him down so she could whisper huskily in his ear. "I just want to thank you for the best time I've had all year."

The raw honesty in her voice tugged at something deep inside of Tony as he felt all the manic energy in her body drain away. She melted bonelessly against him into a long, hot, almost desperate kiss.

A very public kiss as they were very visible from below. Tony knew that if he allowed things to get any hotter between them while in such a public space, Pepper was certainly going to yell at him tomorrow. At the very least.

With difficulty, he managed to find the will to break free. "Do you maybe want to continue this upstairs in my apartment?" He asked, trying to get back the breath stolen from him during their kiss.

"Not here?" Lyra, brows furled in feigned puzzlement, pouted. "I thought that's why we came up here."

It was official; this chick had one of the most adorable pouts Tony had ever seen on anyone older than five.

"Yeah. No. We came up here to..."

"You know what?" Tony looked around. Sure there were lots of comfortable couches and chairs here since the atrium balconies were often used as a mini-reception area. In fact, a few catering tables were already set up for a morning meeting of some sort. But Tony was honestly not sure why they came up here. In another venue, this might have been an 'okay' space for some heavy tonsil hockey while he convinced a chick to come home with him. But how was it that he forgot he was in his own freaking building which had much better places to have sex in? Especially adventurous sex. Because as sure as his name was Tony Stark, he just knew the uninhibited little ball of fun in front of him was most likely capable of the loudest, wildest monkey love he'd experienced in a good long while.

In which case, Pepper would definitely kill him if they did on one of the balconies.

"I'm not sure what I was thinking." He shrugged. "A shorter ride than it takes to get to my penthouse? A last look at the best party of the year? I don't know."

He snaked an arm around her waist and headed them towards the elevator. "But what I do know is that you'll like my apartment better."

"I'm sure I will," Lyra agreed leaning against him with a smile.

As they passed one of the catering tables, Pixie pulled away so she could reach across him to grab a handful of cloth napkins. Tony looked down and gave her a puzzled look. Normally the people he invited to his penthouse were not the type to steal linen or anything. However, from the start he'd known that this chick was more than a bit different. So the only thing he could do was hope that Jarvis would keep an eye on her, in case she decided to start in on his guest towels, or tried to lift a watch, or something.

And she was, different that is, really different. And it was a short, luscious, hell of a good kisser different that Tony could totally live with. As Tony's hands roamed down her body, he was unsurprised when she started loudly moaning into his mouth. He could feel his lips curling up at the corners while she pressed hot kisses against them. As unrestrained as she was, Tony had known she would be a bit noisy, and he wouldn't be the least bit surprised if she turned out to be a screamer.

Not that he minded that in the least, vocal was more than okay as far as he was concerned. Hell, Tony didn't give a good god damn if the whole tower knew he was hitting the right keys with this year's Christmas present. Well except for the fact that Pep would kill him. Tired of bending over and still not getting the angle he wanted, Tony slid his hands under her firm little ass and lifted.

Without interrupting the kiss they were sharing, Lyra gave a little squeak of surprise as his hand continued to move, now sliding down a bit, tugging her legs apart so they could wrap around his waist.

This was a much better angle for him. Plus with her short hair, he could totally nibble on the jumping pulse point under her jaw. “Jarvis, a little help here?” He muttered approaching the elevator with his passenger wrapped securely around him.

Lyra picked her head up. Her brows furrowed in cute confusion as she craned her head around trying to see who Tony was talking too.

As the elevator doors slid open he explained, “Don’t worry, Jarvis is the Artificial Intelligence program that runs this building.” Her face did a little ‘Ah Ha’ of understanding and after a moment she wiggled her very warm self against him, her eyes drifting half closed in apparent contentment.

Draping her arms around his neck and twisting clever fingers into his hair, she leaned back in his grasp. An oddly proprietary look flashed underneath those lowered lids, so quickly that he almost wasn’t sure he had seen it.

“Oh I have such plans for you, Tony Stark,” She purred.

And damned if she didn’t. The chick was totally into the chase.

As the elevator doors opened, she dropped down and twisted out of his grasp, snagging one small hand into his jacket and towing him into his own apartment. They hadn’t even made it out of the foyer when she turned and stopped him. Delicate fingers reached up and traced Tony’s lower lip while her other hand threaded in his hair to tug him down. “You need to strip down to your boxers Tony, we’re going to play a game, and if you win I’ll do ‘anything’ you want.” She breathed into his ear before quickly flicking out her tongue to delicately lick the shell of his ear.

“Anything I want?” Tony looked down and asked with a skeptical smile. “Seriously?”

“Uh huh,” She hummed, wiggling out of his embrace and stepping back several paces. She draped the napkins on the railing overlooking the living room and reached for the zipper on the side of her dress. “But if you lose we are doing it my way.”

“This is so unfair,” He grouched as he hurriedly shucked his jacket over a nearby bench and began undoing his belt buckle. “You have a lot less to take off. So... Just to clarify... If I want you to crawl around on your knees wearing cat ears and climb up into my lap purring, you’d be good with that?” Tony asked with a smirk.

Turning to him with an adorably astonished look, she tossed her dress on top of his jacket and asked in an incredulous voice, “You have a headband with cat ears in your closet Tony?”

Tony wasn’t sure if it was the furled brows or her adorably skeptical look, but something caused his heart to stutter for a moment. Of course, since Pixie wasn’t wearing near the amount of clothes that he was, it could have been the sight of her standing there in a black and pink, trimmed with matching little pink bows, bra and panty set and black heels. However as alluring as it was to watch her run her fingers absently along the top of her panties... and it really was, his attention kept shifting back to her crooked little smile.

“Uh. No. Sadly I don’t. And can I just say that I am starting to think that this shows a complete lack of planning on my part.” He hurriedly kicked off his shoes and stepped out of his trousers. Kicking them aside, he toed off his socks and started loosening his tie.

“So anything?” He asked hopefully, not able to stop himself from just double checking his possible good fortune. “Like back door?” Not that he necessarily wanted to go there, but he did want to see how far Pixie would go. Right now? He was betting pretty far.

A peal of laughter escaped her. “Back door?” Her nose crinkled endearingly. “Seriously Stark, just call it anal sex, we’re both adults here. And yes, that is a choice you can make...” Her head tilted challengingly. “If you win.”

Tony shrugged raising his own brows and his expression scrunching in his own non-verbal version of a ‘Hey, just checking’.

“I guess that means spanking is okay too then huh?”

Tilting her head like she could not believe he was that dorky Lyra gave him a mockingly confused look. “Tell me Tony,” she asked in a throaty voice, stepping up to him and sliding her hands up the front of his now bare chest. “Exactly what have I done that I deserve a spanking?” Mischievous pale green eyes peeped up at him from under her unruly bangs. Her fingers busied themselves tugging his tie free, and rolling it loosely around her palm.

“Have I been bad?” she whispered, stretching up to brush her lips against his.

Heart pounding, Tony just stood there for a minute, wondering at the electrifying tingle he felt when her fingers touched his skin. He placed his hands on her rounded hips and decided it wasn’t her fingertips, it was just her skin against his.

Period.

“Oh sweetheart, you have no idea how very bad you are,” He husked. Thinking quickly he added, “Hell, you just stole a bunch of napkins not ten minutes ago.” He felt her hands reach around and clasp behind his back. “And just now you took my tie without my permission.” Bending down his lips brushed against her’s. “Good girls don’t steal,” He murmured against her all too inviting mouth.

“Ah, well then I guess I do need to be spanked.” Lyra trailed her hands back along his waist each one holding an end of his tie. Bringing them together in the front she tied the textured silk in a knot, the tie now closely fastened around his waist. “I think perhaps it’s time to get started, don’t you? To see who gets their way this evening?” Tugging gently on the ends of the tie, she walked them backwards to where she’d draped the napkins over the railing. Taking two, she threaded them under the tie until he had one hanging from his impromptu belt over each hip. Her delicate fingers caused little electrifying currents to course down to his already hardening cock. She her fingers once more above the red tie around his waist, and then teasingly smoothed down the ends hanging in front of his cock.

Peeling his hands off of her hips, she gave him the other two napkins. “Would you like to place them for me?” She asked archly, crossing her hands behind her head and tilting a bikini clad hip towards him.

“So what exactly are we doing here?” Tony asked, tucking a napkin underneath the waistband on one side of her panties. Not that he didn’t already have a good idea; he was after all a genius. He turned her so her back was now to him so she could place the second napkin over her other hip. “And might I hope you are going to keep your heels on while we’re doing it?” He asked running his fingertips across the soft skin on her hip. Slipping his hand around to her taunt tummy he pulled Pixie tight against his front so he could gently rut against her inviting bottom.

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you?” She asked archly looking over her shoulder and smiling at him. Lyra wiggled out of one of her shoes and kicked it over towards the bench. She repeated that delectable body movement with the other shoe, brushing up against him and causing all manner of areas in his body to tighten. Taking shameless advantage of Tony’s shock at how good it felt to have that firm little ass of hers rubbing against him, she twisted out of his grasp. This was good in a way, because otherwise he would not have been able to resist grinding against her like some high school kid.

“Now Tony, without any help from your security man.” She waved in the general direction of the ceiling. “We are going to play tag. The first person to get both scarfs gets to have their wicked way with the other. Agreed?”

“They’re napkins,” He said just to be argumentative.

“They should have been scarfs. Long smooth silk scarfs that would have felt wonderful as they rubbed between us.” She snickered, “But for now, we just pretend. Agreed?” She walked backwards down the ramp, Tony trailing slowly after her.

“Sure. No going outside, okay? Not that you could without freezing to death,” He added. “And no going to another level. Agreed?”

“Yes... At the count of three?” Tony nodded, and she circled to put the couch between them, and moved towards the opposite side of the living room.

“One.”

“Two.”

“Three!”

The end of the count signified the beginning of possibly the strangest bout of foreplay Tony had participated in for at least the last ten years.

Sprinting toward the petite beauty, he rolled over the back of the couch as she laughed and darted along the terrace windows, scrambling onto the small ledge, she skinned over the glass railing separating the bar entertainment area from the living room. Tony was just glad he wasn’t wearing anything like his dress slacks right now, because the view of her leaping while wearing only that tiny little bikini bottom and bouncing demi-cup bra made him feel pretty damn crowded even in only loose-fitting boxers. Pixie was pretty fast, but Tony’s legs were longer, so he was able to catch up with her by the ramp that went back down to the living room.

Pixie let out a totally faked squeak of terror as he reached for her and then, instead of running, the little faker twisted and ducked under his out stretched arm trying to grab one of Tony’s flags. He managed to bat her hand away and blocked her from heading back towards the living room, but she took off down the hallway before he could grab her. “No locking doors behind you!” He yelled pelting after her. “Jarvis has permission to open them if you do!”

“Like I need to do that!” She hollered back, speeding down the hallway, “You’re too slow Tony.” She made the mistake of heading into the kitchen, no doubt hoping to lose him as she sped around the island, but Tony faked back and managed to snag an arm around her waist. Swinging the panting, laughing Lyra around, the playboy pulled her against him and they wrestled for a few minutes each trying to grab the other’s hands so they could push them away from the flags. Again, using moves worthy of a snake, Lyra wiggled down to the floor, losing her bra but escaping Tony’s grip. Not that he was grabbing her too hard; after all he didn’t want her to end the night with

bruises all over her body.

He grinned to himself, maybe just a one on her bottom if he decided to spank her. Just enough of a bruise to remind her when she tried to sit down the next day, how unwise it was to bet against Tony Stark.

Her cry of triumph and the feeling of cloth sliding down the outside of his leg alerted Tony that he had let his concentration slip. "One more Stark and then your ass is mine!" Lyra crowed in what Tony considered way too gloating a manner. Throwing the napkin in the air, Lyra went flying back out of the kitchen. Sacrificing his dignity for expediency, Tony clambered up a nearby stool and rolled over the top of the breakfast bar, meeting her as she rounded the corner of the bar.

"Gotcha!"

But he didn't. With a shriek, Pixie twisted like a cat avoiding a tub full of water, and doubled back the way she came, almost losing her panties.

Wait? Would that count? She would definitely lose both napkins, worse come to worst he would have more of a chance snatching them up from the floor than trying to grab them as she dashed all over the place.

He could win the game and improve the view at the same time, Tony thought with a mental smirk. Oh yeah, that could definitely work... For him anyhow.

Leaping forward, Tony decided to try his new strategy; making a wild grab, his hand brushing across her hip just above the thin material of her panties. He just missed getting a hold on the thin material but he was able to get her to dodge towards the hallway that led to his bedroom, so he counted that as a definite plus. If he was going to wrestle with the little minx, he would prefer to do it on top of a mattress rather than a cold marble floor.

OoooO

Chasing Lyra into the bedroom, Tony arriving just in time to see her make a gazelle like leap up on to his bed, her barely covered ass completely distracting him. That sight of those smooth mounds curving down to a pair of the nicest thighs Tony has seen in a long time...

Almost as if she had sensed his lapse in concentration, Pixie turned and leapt into his arms in a totally unfair maneuver. Stumbling backwards several paces while Tony was trying to keep them both from falling, the sly bitch snaked a hand down grabbing at his hip.

"Ah ha!" Lyra cried a slight sheen glistening on her heaving chest as she held up Tony's last flag. Twisting out of his arms, she jumped back onto the bed in a way that showed she was still very much in touch with her inner child, most adults having outgrown the inclination to jump on beds, punching their fists in the air and doing a victory bounces.

"I win! I win!" She crowed, waving the napkin over her head as she bounced as high as Tony's very expensive inner spring mattress would allow. Which was a lot, so he guessed it was a good thing that the penthouse had very high ceilings.

Despite his momentary annoyance as a super hero, because he was one no matter what certain news outlets said, losing to a slightly flaky Goth princess, Tony had to admit the sight of a scantily clad woman leaping into the air like that was worth it.

And yeah, maybe it wasn't only the view. There was something so captivating about Lyra's complete abandonment of accepted social behavior that Tony couldn't help but smile at. It was

almost like she was determined to enjoy every aspect of her evening, no matter what he or, judging by the outfit she had worn to the party, anyone else might think.

“Come to me Tony,” she cooed, dropping down to her knees, using the hand with the napkin to balance with, while extending her other hand and crooking a finger at him. Her lips curled in an evil elfish grin that Tony found strangely enthralling. It was the hint of incisors that did it for him.

“I gotta say, you’re good,” the hero of New York admitted. She straightened up proudly. He was now pretty much reconciled to losing their game. Even if it was a bit embarrassing to lose to a pixie with tiny pink bows quivering on her equally tiny black bikini bottoms. Hey, Tony Stark played, and when he lost he paid. Simple as that.

Obedying her summons, Tony headed towards the bed.

“Wait!” she commanded, holding up a hand before turning and crawling towards the head of the bed and pushing the comforter down.

And that was another sight to behold. It was for times like that that Tony was glad that all his security cameras were high definition.

“I want you to be very comfortable while we play,” she told him, looking back and taking in what he knew had to be a ‘gob smacked’ look on his face. She wrinkled up her nose in such an adorable way, a picture of it should have been on a fucking Hallmark Greeting card.

It only took a minute for her to remove the soft plush red and grey chevron patterned comforter, folding it in half and draping it over the hard metal headboard before piling few pillows in front of it.

She rolled her eyes a bit when he winked at her and went back to rearranging the bedding to her satisfaction, but he’d seen the shy smile that had spread across her face when she snuck another peek at him.

“Come here bright boy,” She cooed, pointing to a spot on the bed in front of her.

Okay, while he wasn’t too keen on the nickname, Tony definitely liked everything else he was looking at.

Kneeling on the spot she had indicated, Tony placed his arms over her shoulders while Lyra worked on the knot of his now ruined tie. She’d have had an easier time of it if Tony hadn’t slid his hands down and pulled their hips together and grinding into her.

Her tsking and tching became interspersed with a few muttered, ‘Hold still’s and ‘Stop that Tony’s as he peppered her forehead and temples with tiny kisses while he continued rubbing his cock against her smooth belly.

Despite his ‘help’, Lyra finally managed to work the knot loose. Pulling the mangled tie from his hips and tossing it to the floor, her soft hands slid down his backside pushing his silky boxers down until they also dropped to the floor. With perhaps a bit of shifting on his part.

“You know, you seem so ready, maybe I need to join you,” She whispered into the hollow of his throat while guiding him to recline on the nest of pillows that she had prepared for him.

“Oh I am definitely up for you joining me.” Tony told her as he laid back finding the angle perfect for viewing.

Chapter End Notes

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *allude to* -
Mature Subject Matter and F/M sex. If this is a problem for you please don't read it.
Most of it will not be graphic except maybe the smut if I can manage it, but some
areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if
you will have issues with any of these items.*****

Tony has a plan

Chapter Summary

Yes. Well... Um. Smut. Not perhaps particularly well written, but it was requested. Possibly not exactly this version... but I did hear many screams in Queens Grace that the smut was lacking. Enjoy.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Stella! Can we all thank the techno gods for a fourteen hour time difference?

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 11 – Tony has a plan

As Tony made himself comfortable, Lyra laughed, her warm breath tickling his neck. Without sitting up, she shifted until she was straddling Tony's right leg.

Which, don't get him wrong, was very nice. But rather than having her knee between his legs nudging teasingly against his balls... He really wished she was straddling his lap and, maybe, rolling those luscious hips of hers against his cock. He tried to guide her fully onto his lap but she ignored him and instead, started shifting her hips tauntingly back and forth on his thigh.

Fuck.

Not getting anywhere in his attempts to reposition her, Tony let his hand slide up so he could palm her pert little breasts. His thumbs softly circled her areola, occasionally brushing across her nipples, until they became pebbled.

Lyra continued rock slowly back and forth on Tony's leg, sighing contentedly as she sank down on his chest. Tony's hands drifted over her back while she made tiny noises of contentment. Winding one her arms around his neck she pressed the other one against his chest brushing her thumb lightly across his nipple.

Tipping her head back, Lyra pressed a few kisses playfully against the corner of his mouth while Tony ran his hands down the smooth skin of her back, nestling his questing fingers inside her tiny bikini bottoms. He started stroking hersides and kneading her ass while she rolled her hips with appreciative little murmurs, riding him contentedly for several long minutes. And if he shifted his position to increase the friction of her silky leg against his cock... Well... No harm no foul as far as he was concerned.

With Lyra spread across his chest, they kissed, tiny nibbles, spirited battles for dominance and long

deep kisses that left them both breathless. While nosing damp tendrils off her forehead Tony noticed how wet and reddened her lips had become.

The unfocused debauched look totally works for her, he couldn't help but think before his attention was recalled by an extra little rotation in her strokes causing her to let loose a low moan that Tony thought for a minute he was going to cause him to totally lose his fucking mind. Afterwards, he realised he'd started his own hips rolling in sync with hers to increase the friction. Occasionally she shivered, bore down hard and did that rotation thing with her hips.

And fuck if that didn't feel really, really good.

It also caused Tony's hands to tighten involuntarily on her ass while he popped off a quick prayer to the patron saint of playboys. Not that he was worried that her squirming on top of him like a cat in heat was going to be a problem or anything.

Okay, fine.

The squirming thing was worrisome. Tony was way too old to have the self-control of a teen-ager getting their first piece. He had a reputation to maintain damn it.

Finally, after what seemed like hours, Pixie sat up to look at him, her eyes half-lidded, and a little curve of satisfaction on her now red lips. She pulled his hands off of her, guiding them to either side of his head. Leaning over him, her fingers intertwined with his, she rutted against his juice slicked leg, while her breath hitched and her eyes fluttered almost closed. Watching her lightly bite her lower lip in concentration, Tony fought hard to hold it together.

He was Tony Fucking Stark and he did not get excited at the sight of some chick creaming herself while she rubbed up against him. Not even when she dipped her head down to kiss him, her hot breath tickling the shell of his ear.

"I won Tony. That means I get to tease and torture you for as long as I want to." A particularly hard rotation had her thighs tightening momentarily around his leg as she shuddered and continued shakily, "You keep your hands right here until I tell you to move them." She flicked her tongue out, tasting him right below his goatee, and whispered, "Do you understand?"

Rolling his eyes, he lightly bumped his face against hers. "Fine. You won; you're in the driver's seat."

Untangling their hands, she rubbed both thumbs against the outline of his goatee, flicking them across the outline of his moist lower lip, before tracing down to his chin. "That' right, Tony, and don't you ever."

Kiss

"Ever."

Kiss

"Forget that," She whispered, scattering a few more soft kisses to across his face, temples and lips. She finished up with a gentle nip to his jaw line before lifting off of him and removing those ridiculous panties of hers.

She tossed the tiny scrap of silk to the floor, and finally swung her leg the rest of the way over him.

Thank you god of fornication, Tony thought fervently.

As Lyra sat right *'behind'* his twitching cock, Tony bit back a groan of frustration.

Using the fingers of her right hand, Lyra lightly brushed up and down his length. Irritated, Tony huffed and twisted his hands into the pillow beneath his head to keep from grabbing her.

He groused to himself, *how the fuck is this my life that I lose a bet like this to a goth Tinker Bell?*

Right now, there was nothing in the world the playboy wanted to do more than to pull Pixie Chick tight up against him, roll her fine ass over and bury himself balls deep into her body.

While he didn't do that... Yet. He did stretch to the side, flailing a bit as he struggled to get a condom and tube of lube out of the top drawer of his night stand.

"You know," Tony husked, watching her with half closed eyes as she teased his dripping cock with her fingers. "You're not being very friendly."

"Hmmm?" She murmured lazily, continuing to spread pre-cum over the head of his cock. After a few more moments of teasing, she moved up and sat on top its length. She started rocking back and forth again, cock sliding between her hot wet folds, lazy green eyes watching him in amusement while she traced her lower lip with two forefingers.

Oh fuck yeah, this was better.

Tony wasn't sure which was hotter, her languidly sliding back and forth over his cock, slicking it up with her juices or her teasingly licking and sucking her fingers while watching him with hooded eyes.

"Not friendly? Me?" Her tone inquiring and amused at the same time. She ran wet fingers down her chin while doing a hip roll that caused him to whine like a puppy. Her hands ghosting up his chest, languorously running her fingers down to his belly and back again. "You wanted to spank me. How friendly was that?"

Tony yelped, arching off the bed in surprise, his left nipple having just been pinched hard before she ran her nails down his side, digging in deep enough to get his full attention.

"Tony?" Lyra tucked her chin against her chest. Her eyes glittering, she peered at him through her thick bangs before her hand darted up, surprising him yet again with how hard she pinched his other nipple.

"Hey!"

Tony Stark did not yip. No matter what that noise sounded like, it was not a yip. If anything it was a very manly yelp. He did however, mock glare as the little bundle of joy riding his lap smiled down at him. Her eyebrows raised in amusement as she, gently **this time**, rubbed his abused nipples.

Okay... So that was not a look he would have expected to see on her. Honestly, he'd pegged Lyra as a goth flavored version of those Little Pink Kitten babes, the ones he'd known when he went through his Asian phase. And yes, he was well aware of the shops that catered to those little cuties, having had to replace more than one pair of satin bow topped white hose and tiny beribboned panty sets.

For all, she dressed like a goth version of the Hello Kitty brigade, Pixie apparently had far sharper claws than her paler hued sisters.

“Holy shit!” He screamed.

Forcibly recalled from his musings, Tony latched onto the pillow beneath his head, fighting not to slap her. The bitch had just pinched him about three inches below his belly button. There was almost certainly going to be a fucking bruise there come morning.

“What the hell was that?” He demanded because to his mind that last one definitely wasn’t friendly.

She laughed, and if he had to put a name to it, the grin he received was more tiger-woman than kitten babe. Undeterred by the display of her oh so sharp looking teeth, he continued his complaint, “And can I just say, for the record, you riding ‘*on top*’ of my cock is very unfriendly.”

Lifting both brows, Lyra rolled her sweet little ass a few more times, her wet, kiss bruised lips parting to let out a few teasing moans while keeping her gaze locked to his.

“Pixie.” He warned.

This time, a full on pout was directed Tony’s way. However, while still ignoring the condom; she did reach down to flip the lube open, and squirted a generous amount into her palm. Patty-caking her hands together so they both had lube, she rose up onto her knees and then reached down with a lopsided grin, firmly pumping his cock several times with her slick left hand.

Tony automatically arched up into her hand as much as he could with her sitting on him. “Holy cr-- Warn a guy will ya?”

His eyes almost crossed as he hastily concentrated on the current stock price of Stark Industries.

Holding his length upright against her folds, Lyra pressed against him while firmly stoking the sensitive skin on the topside of his slick cock. He couldn’t help but groan and rock enthusiastically in time with her movements.

Apparently too enthusiastically as far as Pixie Chick was concerned.

“I do so love the noises you make Tony” she purred. “But it’s far too soon I think,” Lyra said, lifting up and releasing his length. “Besides, I want you to watch me.”

Whining in protest when she removed her hand, it took a moment for Tony to actually understand what she had said, because he had been out there quite a ways. In fact he had to blink owlishly a few times before he could get his eyes to even focus.

“I want you to see me come apart for you.” She breathed watching him from half closed eyes. Once she was sure he was actually paying attention, she used the hand that was still lubed to stroke her folds, shivering a bit as she rubbed her clit. Gently tweaking her nipples with the fingers of one hand, she rocked her damp opening back and forth against the other, occasionally dropping down to grind hard against Tony’s cock for a stroke or two.

“Oh yes,” She whispered, the tip of her tongue flicking out a moment before she caught her lower lip between her teeth. A blush of excitement rose up, delicately tinting her features. Sweat started to bead her hairline and Lyra's eyes fluttered almost closed as she started applying a bit more pressure to both the fingers teasing her nipples and the ones buried between her legs. After several long stokes, her breath hitched and she quickly rose up off his lap.

Stifling a whine, Tony decided bet or no bet; this was so not going to happen. He fucking wanted to cum and he would be damned if she was cumming without him. Reaching out, he grabbed Pixie’s

hips and pressed her down hard against him while he stroked up.

She gasped.

“Oh!”

He did it again.

“Ohhhhh yesssss.”

Damn straight it was an ‘oh yes’, Tony thought thrusting up again almost savagely. He might not have been able to catch a goth princess playing flag football in his kitchen, but he could sure as hell make her moan like a porn star in his bedroom. He was a fucking billionaire playboy after all.

Catching her lower lip, brows knit in concentration, Lyra’s movements becoming firmer and less teasing. Each long sweeping stroke against his cock ended in a hip roll that caused a shiver to run down her. Even though she was just riding on top of him, he could feel her folds start to contract with each gasp that escaped her lips.

“Please,” She moaned piteously, rolling her hips harder as he pulled her down against him. The increased friction caused an increasingly louder litany of ‘Please’, ‘Oh Tony’ and ‘Tony pleases’ to tumble from her lips. The fingers that had been teasing her nipples fluttered uncertainly a moment before she melted onto his chest, snaking her hand to his cheek, turning his face towards hers.

He plundered her unresisting mouth while reaching blindly for that damn tube of lube. Years of practice allowed Tony to flip it open one handedly. And if he got more lube on the bed than he did in his hand, he really fucking didn’t care at this point.

Shoving his hand between them, he pressed up against her, making sure to get plenty of lube on her clit before spreading the rest down her folds and around his cock.

“Come on babe, let me see you ride my hand.” He demanded, working the knuckle of his thumb against her clit while pressing against her up into her as much as he could at this angle.

And she did. Ride him. Lyra was vocalizing louder with each stroke until the hand on her back slid up enough for him to twist it into her hair.

Turning her head so he could kiss her, he covered her mouth with his, swallowing her increasingly sharp cries.

Which Tony was, of course, encouraging by rocking up against her as hard as he could. His own breathing hitching when she pressed down against him with increasing sporadic movement of her hips.

She was close, he could feel her muscles contracting. He let go of her hair and Lyra lost no time in wrenching her mouth from his, burying her face against his neck.

Her shuddering breaths were interspersed with almost incoherent cries of ‘Please’, ‘Tony’, and ‘Oh gods, please’ were driving him almost crazy as and the friction against his cock was. Tony was so close to his own edge he needed to do something, anything, to make her come.

He brought his hand down in a sharp slap on her ass.

“STARK!” She screamed, throwing her head back. Her pelvis bucked hard, her movements became hard and shallow, and her breath caught in little sobs.

When she was half way through a sequence of increasingly intense ‘Pleases’ and ‘Oh gods’, he slapped her once more. Screaming shrilly into his neck, Lyra stiffened for a long moment and then dropped bonelessly across his chest while tremors raced up and down her skin.

Shifting his grip to his cock, it only took another dozen or so strokes before He came with a hoarse cry of his own. Hot seed spurted between his fingers, coating both their bellies.

Groaning, Tony waited for his own breathing to slow down *Next go round*, he promised himself, *she wasn’t riding the fucking top of it. Next time he was going to bury himself balls deep in her while he plowed her into the mattress.*

OoooO

That was the plan anyhow. And it was a good plan; unfortunately it just didn’t work out that way.

As Tony’s heart rate finally wound down, he became aware that the tiny gasps and shudders his partner was still putting out didn’t seem to be trailing off.

Wrapping his arms around her waist, a slight frown creasing his brow, he turned his head nudging tousled dark hair with his chin.

“Pixie?”

Rather than answering him, Lyra took and held a deep breath, but the shaking increased, until apparently she couldn’t hold her breath any longer.

Okay. That was definitely a sob.

The half pants and stifled cries of his partner, that he had been only vaguely aware of while he chased his own orgasm, had turned into full on sobs. That dampness he’d been feeling? Wasn’t sweat as he had vaguely supposed, it was instead tears slipping down the side of his neck.

“Shhhhh,” Tony whispered into her trembling hair, rubbing comforting circles across the small of her back.

Groaning internally, because fuck knows he did not feel like moving just yet, Tony rolled them both to the side, ducking his head down to peer momentarily at her tear streaked face before it was buried into a pillow.

“Sweetie, what’s wrong? I didn’t hurt you, did I?” Tony asked apprehensively while continuing to rub her back. He couldn’t for the life of him imagine how he could have. However, there was still the possibility that perhaps his fingernails hadn’t been short enough, or that he hadn’t used enough lube, or that he’d done something that she hadn’t immediately registered as painful while her excitement was peaking. Not that he thought any of those things were likely...

Lyra took a deep breath, holding it for a moment before he heard a tiny muffled wail that sounded very much like ‘no’.

“So, you’re okay?”

This didn’t get him an answer, just a head shake to indicate that Tony wasn’t a complete moron and he had correctly interpreted her one word answer.

“So you’re crying because?”

Tony wasn't really as fluent in 'Pillow Muffled' as Jarvis was, but between the sobs and hiccups he was finally able to piece together enough fragments to be reassured that he hadn't hurt Pixie, and that she was merely overwhelmed, embarrassed, never taking that pillow off of her face, and hadn't experience anything that felt that good in a very, very long time.

While he didn't stop giving the shivering Lyra comforting hugs and consoling pats, He'd be lying if he said that last bit wasn't making him grin from ear to ear. Fortunately, Pixie had wiggled around until she faced away from him so he didn't even have to worry about hiding it. There were two ways to reduce a woman to tears after sex... And from the look of surprised ecstasy on her face when she came and the intensity of the aftershocks she'd experienced, Tony was pretty sure it wasn't because she was unfulfilled and frustrated.

Yes, he was just that good.

Rolling on his back for a moment, Tony groaned and fumbled around until he came up with a handful of handkerchiefs from the night stand. Not that he carried the damn things around with him or anything. But he had found them to be a lot more useful after sex than a wad of flimsy tissues or someone having to get up right away and get a washcloth. He wiped himself off and used another to gently clean Pixie's tummy and what nether regions he could easily reach, tossing both on the floor behind him when he was finished.

Curling again against his trembling partner's back, Tony buried his face in her hair after folding one last handkerchief into fingers that had a death grip on the pillow covering her face. Mumbling comforting little nothings while gently stroking her now clean belly, Tony zoned out, eventually falling asleep.

He woke up with one very damp pillow beside him, and one very used handkerchief on the opposing night stand.

OoooO

It had been a really long year, and Tony was glad it was almost over. Feeling almost mellow, Tony contemplated this year's upcoming festivities. He'd been so lucky the last two Christmas parties, he was pretty sure that his luck wouldn't hold up for a third. While not something he normally did, Tony decided that maybe this year he should take out some insurance.

"Hey Jarvis, do me a favor. Look up the tapes from last year's party and find me contact info for the Cosplay Princess, will ya?"

So maybe that evening hadn't gone quite as he planned, but she had been such a bundle of fun and games that Tony did regret that they'd never made it to round two. Not that he was getting old or anything, it was just that by the time he had got done soothing her crying jag, he'd been so bonelessly relaxed himself that he'd fallen asleep.

Still, it had been an interesting evening, he thought, smiling to himself.

Several hours later, he was dealing with a flurry of emails from a particularly annoying senior researcher questioning, as in disputing, charges that Tony had slapped on his project code for a fix he'd done.

"Sir? I am sorry to inform you that I can't find any contact information for Ms. Walker."

Jarvis's voice sounded not only apologetic but also more than slightly embarrassed.

Frowning, Tony hit the send button, firing off a bit of frankly snarky advice consisting of what a

research group needed to do if they didn't want to get hit with charges for his time on their future projects. Then, with brows furrowed, he set his tablet down on the work bench in front of him, leaning back in his chair.

"Seriously, Jay?" He asked rolling his shoulders to loosen them up.

"I'm afraid so, sir. While it is not outside the realm of possibilities that I cannot find the current whereabouts of someone determined to remain hidden, I do find it odd that I have not even found any early electronic records or indeed any social media postings that match her description."

Okay, that was odd. Someone of Pixie Chick's age had to have some type of electronic presence. Even if they were just blurry Instagram pictures from some high school party she attended as a kid.

"I have, of course, found several Lyra Walkers, including a few who were amazingly enough as you put it, 'Cosplay princesses', but again, none of them match Ms. Walker physical description."

"That's a bit odd, wouldn't you say, Jay? Considering all the databases you have access to?"

"Indeed sir, most odd. Would you like me to keep looking?" Jarvis inquired.

Tony twirled his chair around while he considered what he wanted to do. "Yeah... I guess so, just passive though, don't devote a lot of time to it. Still, if she wasn't who she said she was, it would be nice to find out *what* she actually is." Industrial spy or freelance writer being Tony's first guess, but since nothing had been printed about him, nor had Stark International had any strange info leaks that hadn't already been traced back to one source or another, that wasn't even looking too likely.

While it seldom happened, it was wrong to say that Tony never slept with the same woman twice. *'Almost never'* would be more correct. So Tony temporarily shelved his curiosity as to who Lyra Walker was. Since she wasn't available, he decided to back up a Christmas and contact that Sky chick. He'd liked her too. Amazingly so, or he wouldn't have remembered even her name after all this time.

"Of course, with a last name like Jones, it might take a while to find her Jay, but we have time."

"*'Smith'* Sir, and I will start immediately."

Several days later when Jarvis also came up blank on Sky Smith, Tony knew something was wrong.

Possibly SWORD or someone was slipping agents into his bed again... This had regretfully happened more than once in the past, but the Christmas chicks didn't feel like agents. Pixie was too quirky for someone bent on professional seduction, Sky too bossy for someone who was required to captivate him.

"This is statistically impossible Jarvis."

"Unfortunately sir, math equations aside--,"

"Yeah, yeah. It did occur. Twice. In a row even. I can't even begin to calculate the odds."

Shrugging, he rolled his eyes and mugged for Jarvis' camera. "Well obviously *I* can, genius and all that, but still."

Tony bounded over to his table of broken or half-built toys and snatched up the first thing that caught his eye. There wasn't anything important here, but that didn't really matter. He just needed

something to tinker with while he brainstormed.

“Jarvis, open up a new folder. We have a project.”

“Very good sir, what name will we be using?” Jarvis asked amused.

“Christmas Pressies.”

“I’m sorry sir, but you already have a folder with that name.”

“Oh. Right. Umm...” Tony cast his thoughts about for a new name, eyes glancing around looking for inspiration. The ‘bot charging station was festooned with an odd collection of decorations that Minion had ‘relocated’ from the penthouse, apparently at the request of Dummy and You. “How about ‘*Mistletoe Princesses*’?” he suggested while clearing off a work table and assembling several tools.

“Festive and appropriate, Sir.”

“I know. Okay. Gather up all the pictures you can find, any video that might be left on the general tower security servers, and see who they arrived with, oh, and see if our neighbors have any saved feed. Maybe we can catch a cab number and track down where they picked up their fare or something.

Side by side photo comparisons showed that they were definitely two different women, one was tall and lean, the other short and curvy. But as dissimilar as their height and build were, quite a few other things were matching up. Both women were athletic, brunettes, had strongly sculpted facial structure, green eyes... Sort of, Sky’s being a blue green hazel. Sky had been pretty strong for a chick and Lyra was ninja fast, but their above average physical attributes, notwithstanding Tony had been struck by how many mannerism’s they shared once they became comfortable with him and were away from the crowds. Certain ways they moved, some of the expressions that flashed across their faces. Even the way they dressed, simple lines and thick collars around their throats.

About fifteen hours later, Tony was about half finished fixing the mini Electromagnetic Rail Gun prototype and Jarvis had amassed an impressive amount of information, not one bit of it older than ten minutes before internal security vids showed either woman in the building. “Jarvis, bring up anything you can find for after they left the tower will ya?”

Interestingly enough he noticed that not one bit of information that Jarvis showed him was from a source that Tony hadn’t specifically mentioned or requested. Normally the smug bastard tried to bury Tony with info from places that Tony would never even think to look.

Scowling thoughtfully Tony glared at the far wall. *Me thinkth that Jay’s binary code now has a two in it.*

“Jarvis,” Tony drawled, “Is there maybe something about this project you want to share with the class?” Tony was curious to see if his AI was going to evade his questions or try outright lying.

“Certainly not, sir.”

“Okaaaaay. It’s just that, and please correct me if I’m wrong here, you don’t seem to be your normal helpful self today.”

“I most strongly disagree, sir.”

Shaking his head in amazement, Tony set down his tools, amused skepticism plastered across his

features. “Really? Well, I couldn’t help but notice that you haven’t suggested even one avenue that we should look into nor have you proposed a single theory.” Tony pursed his lips before he settled his features into an over the top look of intense interest. “That is totally not you Jay. Anyhow, I would really love to hear your thoughts on who these two lovely ladies might be.”

“As I have told you, I have not been able to find any records on Ms. Smith or Ms. Walker in any of the databases I have accessed.”

Smiling to himself, Tony decided to go get a cup of coffee from the auto-dispenser in the lab’s kitchen area. “Yeah. You did mention that, but what I want to know is if ‘you’ have any idea who they might be, based on information that is not in any of the databases you searched.”

There was a short pause before Jarvis responded, short that was for a human, but an eternity for Jarvis. “I am afraid I am unable to speculate on their identity, sir.” He said, almost apologetically.

A wicked grin flashed across Tony’s face. “Are you really now? So let’s just recap, shall we? ‘Sky’ and ‘Lyra’ look nothing alike but share an impressive array of similarities, we can’t find any background information on them at all, they almost magically appeared ten minutes before they entered the tower, and we have no information on where they went ten minutes after they left the building, nor have we been able to find out how they even gained entry to the parties.”

“A masterful summary on your part, if I may say so Sir.”

“So I can’t get to you speculate? Not even a little.”

“I’m afraid not, sir.”

Pursing his lips thoughtfully, Tony came up with a plan.

“Okay, this year I want you to keep an eye on Steve. If he starts dancing or talking to anyone we don’t have information on, I want you to run a check on them. If they come up blank, let me know immediately.” Tony could almost hear Jarvis sigh.

“As you wish, sir.”

“Also, tomorrow, remind me I want to order a few things for the back closet. Best to be prepared you know.”

It wasn’t necessary for his plan, but Tony decided to see what would happen if Tony ignored any mystery woman that fluttered around Steve this year. And what would happen if he ignored them in favor of someone else. Since the odds were pretty high that he would be pissing off a vindictive god, Tony decided to make sure his eye candy was someone he despised.

“Jarvis, make sure Christine Everhart somehow gets a last minute invitation to the party. Give an invite to one of the more discreet interns she’s been bugging and get them to invite her on the down low as a plus one or something.”

“Very good Sir, I know just who to approach for this task.”

“Wonderful, I don’t know about you Jay, but I am positively looking forward to this year’s party.”

OoooO

“Sir, Ms. Everheart will not be returning.”

Tapping the communication stud on his bracelet once in acknowledgement, Tony continued to smile as Terrance Wilkes, one of his senior engineers, tried to make nice. So Tony chuckled, made small talk and listened to a quick rundown of the strengths that these two new employees were bringing to the company. While he frankly doubted that Wilkes really gave a shit, him making a couple of newbie engineers feel included at their first major company event, was a welcome change from how the man had previously treated his departments employees.

So hey. Sensitivity classes, coupled with the very real threat of being fired and blacklisted, actually worked. Who knew? Other than Stark International's head of H.R., of course.

As soon as he could, Tony eased towards a secluded corner so he could check the security feed Jarvis pushed to his phone. Momentarily, he'd been alarmed when Jarvis alerted him that Beatrice Viator, Rogers' new friend, had slipped away from her group to follow Christine to the ladies room. Granted he had expected it to happen, but if Beatrice 'was' Loki, things could get messy in a hurry. Fortunately, before he could get too worked up, he remembered that Jarvis was watching... And it wasn't like anyone undeserving of punishment would be in the line of fire. Not that he really wished the muckraking reporter any real harm. However, he did know he would be totally fine with what ever happened as long as Christine escaped without any permanent damage. Besides, with Jarvis monitoring, it wasn't like she was in any real danger.

The entire take down was as smooth an operation as anything Natasha could have come up with. Somehow, someone accidentally stumbled, bumping an innocent passerby into Christine, who knocked the reporter off balance, while stepping on the hem of her long flowing gown. Tony watched as the combination of actions resulted in the skirt of Christine's dress being almost completely ripped off. Fortunately, the reporter had been wearing underwear. Unfortunately, the dress did not have any kind of an underskirt built into it. Christine ended up having to wrap the torn material around her like a sarong. She made a quick escape out one of the side doors before anyone could post a clip on YouTube. Not so surprisingly, the extremely apologetic, innocent passerby that caused all the damage, was none other than Grandpa Spangles' new friend.

OoooO

"Steve. How's it going, buddy? Enjoying yourself?" Tony's smile faltered in the face of Rogers' patented 'I am so disappointed' look. "What?" Tony demanded. "What did I do now?"

Looking quite dashing if slightly uncomfortable in his suit, Steve shook his head and indicated the glass the industrialist was holding. "Tony, do you think it's wise to be spending so much time with Ms. Everhart? Especially when you're drinking? She isn't exactly a fan of ours, you know."

"Relax, Steve, it will be fine. Besides, I think she's already left." Switching his drink to his other hand, he reached out, "Hi. Tony Stark. I hope you're enjoying my party."

With a wide smile and warm hazel brown eyes crinkling in sly amusement, a slim hand was held out to him. They shook.

"I'm glad to make your acquaintance, Mister Stark, I'm Beatrice Viator. You know, Captain Rogers here has spoken very highly of you."

"He has?" Tony asked, looking over the short, slender brunette in front of him. She was wearing a tight black velvet cocktail dress, strapless with a beaded choker collar that fastened to double straps in the back. The choker and bodice of the dress were decorated with intricate but understated black beading. Even with the matching beaded high heels, she was still a few inches shorter than Tony. He chuckled, flicking his eyes over towards Steve for a moment. "Now why do I find that hard to believe?"

It wasn't too long afterwards that he was able to detach 'Bea' from Stars-and-Stripes' orbit, and eventually convince her to come back to his tower and play dress up with him.

Big surprise there huh?

He managed to get her into an Ironette outfit, which as he knew she would, she looked hot as fuck in. Tony was not the least bit surprised when Bea negotiated a scenario where she was not a backup dancer, but was instead '*Iron Lady*' and he was the dastardly evil industrialist whose plan at world domination she foiled at the last moment.

While Tony often disagreed with Pepper it turned out she was right; having a formal office up in the penthouse did come in handy. Especially when you wanted to correlate data while getting your brains sucked out through your dick.

Tony often thought fondly of that session. Not only for the fun he'd had as Loki had adlibbed dialog and positions, but also for the insight it gave him as to how the god's mind worked. Over the course of the next couple of years, Tony developed a behavior model for '*Loki of Asgard*' in the areas that he obviously couldn't explore while the god lived, or rather, was imprisoned, in his tower.

Female Loki's outfits always had a submissive touch, if she wasn't wearing a collar or choker, she was wearing cuffs of some sort. Male Loki more often than not had a scarf wrapped around his neck, or at least draped around it, yet when push came to shove, Loki was anything but submissive. Not unlike Tony, either gender of Loki had a tendency to be fairly bossy when it came to getting what they wanted.

There was no situation where he or she would not try to make a deal. Even if it was only for who got their rocks off first. Reflexive negotiation was almost a given where his god was concerned. But to give him his due, Loki did honor his deals.

Additionally, he was like a fricking cat, and a feral one at that. Starved for affection, Loki would only accept it on his terms, clawing the shit out of you if you stepped one toe over the boundary of what he offered. Except when he was really soundly asleep. Then you could do anything you wanted, and the god would all but offer up his tummy and purr. The trick there of course correctly judging if he was sleeping deeply enough for you to even start without being eviscerated.

And finally, Loki had some really, really fucking weird hang-ups when it came to doing the actual deed. After several years of carefully artful inquiry, Tony concluded this was due in general to Asgardian views on submission during sex, how magic users were regarded, and a really strong prohibition to royal bastards weaseling their way into the succession. Add that to Loki's own determination to limit his vulnerability and you had one seriously fucked up godling.

And that, Tony thought was how they got here. Him bent over a couch, and not in the fun way, with green eyes glaring menacingly down at him. Suspiciously glistening green eyes, Tony noticed. He might could work with that.

Loki snarled wordlessly, all but yanking the hair from the back of Tony's head as he pulled him further down towards the seat of the couch.

Tony knew exactly how they ended up here with Loki all angry and lashing out. Now that he considered it, a Norse god trying to kill you being remarkably effective at sharpening one's thought processes, he was pretty sure he saw a way out for them.

Of course, there was no way this was going to end with either of them walking away unscathed.

Tony knew that.

But as the pressure increased on his throat, he knew that just being able to walk away at all was a lot to hope for.

Chapter End Notes

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* -
Mature Subject Matter and F/M sex. Fairly detailed sex. If this is a problem for you
please don't read it. Nothing horribly kinky or anything but some areas could get
trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you will have
issues with any of these items.*****

Tony tossing

Chapter Summary

Tony's attempts at soothing an enraged god of mischief reveal an uncomfortable truth.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Stella! Can we all again thank the techno gods for a fourteen hour time difference? Yay us!

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES
***** None really in this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 12 - Tony Tossing

“How does it feel, Stark?” The god growled into his ear, causing a shiver composed of equal parts of fear, desire and anxiety to thrill through Tony’s body. “How does it feel not to be in control of what happens to you?”

“Sir?” Jarvis called out, alarm tinging his voice.

Jarvis calling in reinforcements would certainly cause the situation to escalate and that is absolutely the last thing Tony wants or needs. “I got it Jarvis,” He wheezed as best he could with the weight of an angry god compressing his lungs.

“Are you sure Sir, I could call--”

“Mute, Jarvis. I’m on top of it.”

“Are you, really, Stark?” The god snarled. Loki’s forearm, which had been pressing down on Tony’s chest, slid up to apply a bit of pressure to his throat, the other gripping the hair at the back of Tony’s skull, pulling his head back an angle. “Let’s just see about that.”

Squirming would get him nowhere, even if he could make up his mind if he wanted to escape or just get in a position with a bit more leverage. Hell, he couldn’t even decide what kind of leverage he would go for? His back was killing him, but then certain other parts of his body were also demanding attention.

“That being on top thing was rhetorical, of course.” Tony wheezed, that being about all he could do with an entire god pressing down on him. “If we’re talking physically, I just want you to know *I am* willing to bottom on occasion—”

Yurk—

Somewhere, fleetingly, in the back of Tony's mind, he had hoped that his off-handed offer of turnabout might show Loki that he was willing to continue working with him on his Asgardian... Inhibitions. Which his god had already pretty much rebelled against anyhow, 'cause despite his hang-ups, Loki did like sex. Loki liked sex like seventeen year old guys like sex, hot, heavy, now and more please. And from past information Lo had let slip, he'd spent centuries quietly rebelling against that stupid Asgardian anti-egri mindset. Not that that had come as a surprise to Tony. He had noticed during their clubbing phase that Loki had an equally keen eye for pretty guys.

A wave of anger and irritation swept over Tony so intense it bewildered him a moment.

Yeah, so maybe he wasn't okay remembering that hot Greek model who'd slung his arm around Loki.

Best not to dwell on that particular memory, Tony told himself sternly. Hell, the amount of anger that mental image caused never ceased to completely piss the playboy off, which it shouldn't have since it wasn't like he and Loki were even an item then. Item or not, hot and gorgeous times two or not, even at that time there was no way he would have consented to sharing Lo with another guy. Fuck, before it had been over, he'd was borderline jealous of the females the god had picked up and brought home.

But we are not going there.

Lo liked sex and he liked guys as well as women, no problem there with Tony not being a chick. Tony was momentarily diverted into wondering if the Trickster 'like' liked girls the way Tony did, or if he liked them because he was expected to? Or more probably, he decided, it was because in Loki's long life, he'd had time to try lots of fun things. Tony made a mental note to put visiting 'Elf Land' on his to-do list. At any rate, Loki's sticking probably had nothing to do with Tony being a guy, but more to do with Odin's fucking all-seeing throne, those damn nosy ravens, and Heimdall the God of All Peeping Toms. Which Tony supposed made sense, because no matter how much an exhibitionist Lo was when he was pranking someone... And Tony had been on the mild side of the god's love for that... It must be impossible to truly get your freak on, knowing your step-father, his winged snitches, or the family's creepy uncle, was possibly watching everything you did.

I need to see if we can jam them somehow. Fuck, if he could foil all the snooping techniques of Earthguard, he could surely do something about magical snooping... especially with a magical expert to assist him. And no, now was not the time to think about how sexy Loki would look barefoot, shirtless and wearing low slung jeans while assisting him in the lab.

Tony tried again to ease the strain on his back and neck, since only his toes were touching the floor, he couldn't even push himself the rest of the way down on the couch. Which left wrapping his legs around Loki's for a bit of leverage. This worked, in as it helped the strain on his back muscles, but didn't help as the pressure and friction caused other areas to become strained.

"Fair is fair after all," he gasped, continuing his thoughts on bottoming while fighting the urge to rub against the angry god as his new position allowed much more pleasant sensations to course through his body.

Okay, the gasping was maybe not totally from having his lungs compressed by the god, or at least not from the weight of the god at any rate. He never should have conjured those mental images of Hot Loki Clubbing and Scantly Clad Loki the Slutty Lab Assistant.

Unfortunately, Tony's errant thoughts, his new position and the thin material of his dress slacks also announced his body's betrayal to the elemental force holding him down. His body was apparently far less worried about the threat to his life than his mind was.

Green eyes locked on to his, their rage muted slightly by a momentary puzzlement. “Honestly, Stark, I wasn’t aware that you enjoy being forced? Is that why you thought I would?”

“Hey, not apologizing here. It’s been a while you know,” Tony protested only slightly defensively, he’s never forced anyone in his life. Except, of course, if they wanted to be forced and then it was okay and completely hot, but that was beside the point right now. “I’ve been a little too busy worrying about your ass to spend time chasing anyone else’s, you know. So maybe, I am a bit crowded. Sue me.”

Even though, there should have been nothing sexy about being angrily manhandled over the back of a couch... Tony did have quite a few kinks in his closet and there was a whole lot of hot god pressing up against him, so... He gave a mental shrug. So maybe he was getting a little hard from something that ‘*shouldn’t*’ really be a turn on. What of it? It had been a while, and quite frankly, if he came out of this session a little less crowded then he would think a few bruises well worth the price. Anyhow, it had been years since he’d had angry sex, so he could definitely be up for that even.

And Loki’s face was so damn close he just couldn’t help himself.

Tony stretched up, letting a pleased sigh escape him as he nuzzled the Trickster’s neck, just the fucking smell was enough to make him want to laugh in delight. Eyes fluttering shut, Tony let an involuntary little mewl of happiness escaped him as he planted two very soft kisses, one kiss on Loki’s neck and the other right under his ear.

And then opened his eyes to a look up at a somewhat surprised Asgardian.

Astonished. Hungry. Tender. Needful.

Tony’s heart leap as all that and more flashed across the Loki’s face and then, sank as the masks slipped back into place, banishing those expressions as if they had never been, leaving him with suspicious, angry Asgard Loki.

“Arrrghhhh!” Snarling the god shifted his grip so that he had a double handful of Tony’s shirt. Yanking him up off the couch Loki spun them both and before Tony could properly get his feet to support him he was shoved viciously across the room.

Landing on the remains of what had been a fairly expensive side table Tony closed his eyes a moment to rein in his temper. Rolling onto his hands and knees he shot Loki an annoyed look.

“I am not some bought and paid for whore, Stark, and I don’t appreciate being drugged!”

“Yeah. Whatever. I’ll make a note of that for future reference. However, I just want to point out that drugging is what kept you out of trouble.” He snapped, climbing slowly, painfully, to his feet. He might be extremist enhanced and Momma Space Viking improved but the shit still hurt.

“Or should I say, *more* trouble. You threw a knife at your father for crying out loud!”

Using that gliding sidestep that the god seemed to have patented, Loki stalked towards him.

“He is ‘*NOT*’ my father!” The god spat beginning to circle menacingly. Tony huffed and did an abbreviated eye roll while backing away from the panther-esk personification of pissed asking himself for what had to be the millionth time, *how was this his life?*

“Not your father?” Tony threw his hands up in disgust, “Okay, so then you threw a knife at the king of everything, which is even worse because you don’t get the family discount.”

Faster than the eye could follow, Loki darted in and shoved hard, sending Tony once again flying across the room to land in a heap on the hard marble floor. This time, fortunately, he didn't break furniture, or bones, but he did crack his elbow hard as he fell.

Hissing through his teeth in pain, Tony rubbed hurriedly on his arm, trying to will away the pain. "Damn it all to hell Lo! Why are you being so difficult?"

"Because I have nothing to lose, Stark. Including, apparently, the ability to even be aware of what bed I am going to wake up in." The god hissed narrow eyed, curling and uncurling his fingers as he again did that weird feline sidestep of his over towards where Tony had fallen.

"Okaaaay," Tony drawled, shaking his arm to try to get the rid of the pins and needle sensation while warily watching the stalking god. "Admittedly, you were a bit out of it when we left Asgard. I'll give you that one."

Loki's lip curled disdainfully. "Drugged."

"Which, as I already said, was done to keep you from getting into even more trouble. Do I deserve a ration of shit for that? Okay, just for the sake of argument, maybe I deserve some, but Mister Wizard please, do tell, what was *'your'* grand plan?

"What plan?"

"Exactly," Tony said, climbing to his feet and turning so as to keep facing Loki as he circled him. "What were you going to do to lessen the impact of your prison term? Or rebuilding project? What ideas did you have for speeding it up? Or, hell, just making it more bearable?"

Tony could almost see steam coming off the god, he was that angry. Fortunately for Tony, Loki was without the majority of his magic mo-jo, because if he hadn't been, the god would have no doubt turned him into a Newt, or Care Bear, or whatever it was that pissed off magic users turned you into, when they were throwing a tantrum. While the engineer, in fact, appreciated that his godling was miffed with good reason... Delicate mental state or not... All this flinging-people-around shit hurt and it was starting to get on his last nerve. So yeah, diplomacy was most likely called for, but since Tony didn't really see that working either, he decided to go for bluntness.

"Come on, big boy."

Tony lifted up his hands, fingers beckoning in a 'bring it on' motion. "Your ideas? Just toss 'em out, because I really want to know what your grand plan was."

Instead of continuing towards him so he could do the whole stalking-circle thing, Loki stopped perhaps ten feet away from Tony. The godling's scowl looking like it was going to morph into a massive pout at any minute.

"You didn't have any, did you?"

Loki's fists clenched so hard his knuckles turned white, so Tony spread his arms, and decided ecologists be damned, to throw a little oil on the troubled waters he had to deal with. "Hey. I'm not saying it would have been easy to come with something, what with almost nothing to work with." Unable to help himself Tony gave a little shrug and interjected, "Well, I would have of course, but I'm me. I'm just saying maybe... maybe you could accept a windfall when it comes your way?" He coaxed.

Loki looked dumbstruck, his brows rose almost to his hair line and for a moment, his mouth moved without anything coming out of it. Sadly, all too soon he got ahold of himself.

“I should accept and be grateful?” His voice rising at the end with shocked disbelief. “When I know full well why you did this? You think I should be... grateful?”

“Yeah, I put up a lot of money, and again, this is me talking, but what exactly, beside the companionship of your smart sexy self, what exactly do you think I’m getting out of this? I wasn’t exactly in the market for a part time spouse, you know. I did this because I was worried about you.”

For the merest instant, the tiniest sliver of time possible to calculate, Loki lit up. Hope blazing so bright across his features Tony should have been wearing burning goggles.

Then, just as quickly, it snuffed out, leaving his god looking devastated. Kid at Christmas who’d run downstairs to find that not only did he not get the game system he’d been hoping for, but that there wasn’t even a single present with his name on it under the tree. In fact, the tree had already been taken down and tossed out on the curb. That kind of devastated. Bereft wasn’t a good look for his god. Tony hated it and particularly hated that somehow his words had triggered it.

OoooO

“Yeah, I put up a lot of money, and again, this is me talking, but what exactly beside the companionship of your smart sexy self, do you think I’m getting out of this? I wasn’t exactly in the market for a part time spouse you know. I did this because I was worried for you.”

Tony’s words were still floating in the air, when Loki started laughing, a hateful, bitter laugh with just an undercurrent of uncontrollable hysteria creeping into it before it was abruptly cut off.

“I *know* what you are getting, Stark.” The god ground out through gritted teeth, raising his chin. Loki looked disdainfully, almost hatefully down his nose at the engineer. “I doubt very much that my ‘charms’ are more than a minor bonus compared to all else that you are receiving.”

Yeah, this definitely could be going better. Tony fought to keep from showing frustration knowing as bad as it might be, it would always be worse.

Releasing his lower lip, Tony told him, “You are not minor anything to me Lo.”

Loki started pacing in that sinuous style of his, his fingers twitching in aggravation. If the god had possessed a tail, it surely would have been lashing back and forth in irritation.

“Of course I’m not Stark. I know much better than you how much is it worth to you to have a Master Level Mage at your beck and call. Even with the restrictions Odin is going to place upon me, Midgardian kingdoms of old would have beggared themselves for someone as skilled as I am.”

Okay, but it wasn’t like he had done it for that reason. “Well, but--”

“But not only a mage, also a scholar, a teacher? Someone with detailed knowledge of the Nine Realms and beyond?” Stopping a moment, Loki’s lip curled into an ugly grimace as he shot Tony a look of pure disgust. “And what else is it that the great Tony Stark has bought with his coin? Access to the Royal Family? Access to Asgard, and for that matter, the other eight realms that are currently unavailable to virtually every other mortal on your realm?”

All the explanations and excuses that he was considering flew out the window as Tony’s brain stuttered to a stop and his mouth dropped open.

“You mean someone else on Earth can reach Asgard?” The engineer asked incredulously. It wasn’t that he was ignoring the implications of the other stuff Loki was alluding to...

But the first person to make it to Asgard in modern times should have been Tony Fucking Stark!

Loki tch'ed angrily and resumed his pacing.

"Two that I know of, not that the one advertises that he is from Midgard and neither of them dabble in commerce," Loki all but spat, "You, and you alone, will have access to raw materials unavailable to anyone else on Midgard, along with someone who not only knows about them and their properties, but also how to facilitate the purchase and transportation of these items. How much is this worth to you? How much is it worth for Stark International to have access to markets that contain material and technology not only from the nine realms but other galaxies? Technology that can be reverse engineered for the benefit of your company?"

Tony opened his mouth totally prepared to rebut these insinuations, but then swallowed hard stricken by the fact that even if he could lie good enough to fool Loki... Which he totally couldn't, nothing he mentioned wasn't something that Tony hadn't thought about.

Unaware, or, most likely, just uncaring of the mini mental break down Tony was about to have, a scowling Loki continued his tirade, his previously low scornful voice picking up volume and punch now.

"That is what I 'know' you are getting, so please don't think to lie to me by insinuating that it was for the pleasure of my company and the sparkle in my eyes that you have gone to so much trouble and expense. Twice what you paid and more still would not get you even a speck of that without me."

"Okay, I got--"

Abruptly, the god reached out and snatched a heavy lamp off a side table he was passing and fired it so fast at Tony's head that the engineer wasn't completely able to dodge it. The highly polished metal lamp, the fucking heavy highly polished metal lamp struck Tony's clumsily defending arm so hard, he knew it was going to leave a hell of a bruise.

"Oh, and my plan?" Loki snarled, stopping at last so he could give Tony his undivided hatred. "My plan was to endure. With the resources I had at hand balanced against the forces against me. It was the best plan I could come up with. And don't think I didn't spend years trying to come up with something better."

"No."

Eyes as wide as they could go, Loki sucked in a deep, obviously mortally offended breath.

Tony held up his placatingly. "I know you did," he said hastily. "I shouldn't have said it like that. I didn't mean I didn't think you weren't trying to come up with a plan. If anyone could have figured a way out, it would have been you. I meant 'no', I didn't think of all those other things like you thought I did." Licking his suddenly too dry lips, Tony noticed that Loki was a lot closer than he'd been a minute ago.

"Tell me truly. You did not consider any of those advantages?"

Small children looking at an unrequested spoonful of cherry colored liquid wouldn't have had a more skeptical expression on their face than Loki did right now. Tony's attempt at a reassuring smile flickered out of existence almost immediately.

"No."

Loki was quite close now, the material of his starched shirt brushing against Tony's shoulder as he circled and stopped behind him. "No?" He asked, purposefully leaning down a bit to breathe the question directly into Tony's ear. Totally causing a shiver to run down the engineer's spine. "So my fair charms were all you considered?"

Tony could feel wisps of Loki's hair brushing against his neck and fuck if he didn't want anything more in the world than to just lean back, right now.

"Umm. Yeah." He muttered, wanting to turn his head but, knowing with the mercurial mood his god was in, he didn't dare.

Again, he could feel wisps of hair feathering across his skin, this time at the back of his neck, as Loki switched to his other ear, standing so close Tony could feel the heat radiating off the god's body.

"Do not," Loki whispered, his lips brushing Tony's ear, and his voice so soft it could barely be heard, "Lie to me."

Chapter End Notes

Yes. So. We are back to present time. I do hope you all enjoyed our little foray into the past. Well except for the cliff hanger and what not. Chapter 14 is done and beta'd but I am still trying to decide if Loki is going to chill or go ballistic on Tony. **Your thoughts and reasoning for one or the other would be most appreciated.**

To all who have enquired about my mental state, you will be glad to hear that I am mostly back to my normal crazy and have high hopes that I will quit being such a slacker writing wise in the near future.

Whatever makes you happy

Chapter Summary

Negotiations Loki style. Otherwise known as this is why we can't have nice things.

Chapter Notes

Okay, short chapter.... But it is way early. So that counts for something yes? Actually, this is the best place to break the chapter, otherwise it was going to be huge and possibly not ready on time. I know it's short, but I hope you enjoy it.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES
***** Light Smut

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 13 - Whatever makes you happy

"Do not lie to me." Loki had whispered immediately before shoving him across the room. This was totally getting old, more than a working BiFrost right now he wishes Loki's sexy self had a Tony Tossing Inhibitor of some sort installed on him.

When it was all said and done, Tony ended up on the other side of the room, slammed up against a window. Fortunately, for his sanity, it was not 'that' window. But still, it was a window, so the only thing keeping him from having a full blown panic attack, was the fact that he was, as always, wearing his suit bracelets. Before the inventor could even consider turning around, strong fingers wrapped around his right wrist, jerking it back and up, forcing Tony to rise onto the tips of his toes to keep the gorgeous bastard behind him from dislocating his shoulder. With his other hand tugging on the arm of the hand that Loki had wrapped around his throat, Tony's didn't have any way to keep the side of his face from being mashed up against the cool glass.

"Okay! Okay! I'm not going to lie to you," He told the god who was breathing harshly in his ear. "I did think of all those other items. Hello genius? How do you think I managed to convince Pepper and your dad--"

He paused when Loki growled in his ear.

"You really need to get over that one, ya know." This perhaps was not what he should have said, as it just resulted in his arm being twisted a bit harder.

"Ow! Okay. Okay."

His Arm dropping in to a fractionally less excruciating position, Tony rushed to try and get all of his reasoning... Not excuses, never excuses. But his reasoning out on the table and hope that it might, perhaps, put his god in a better place mentally. And possibly encourage said god to maybe let go of his arm, ideally before the inventor lost all use of it.

Of course, right now, anything south of homicidal and/or torn off was going to get Tony's complete vote of support.

"Adopted parents, okay? Can I say that? Anyhow, I did think of those things, it's how I convinced everyone that I was serious, okay? Because the other reasons? The personal ones? Those were just a bit too stalker-ish to get me any traction with them."

Huffing Tony continued. "I'm not stupid, you're not stupid... Them... I'm not too sure about. Okay, Pep's not stupid either, but they have a blind spot, ya know? Other people don't want to hear that we have a connection, I have to give them reasons they can believe. Reasons that make sense according to their perceptions of us."

"We don't have a connection Stark, we never did," Loki hissed into his ear pressing him harder into the window.

"Fucking hell, Lo." Tony was busy thanking god, his old housekeeper's god, that he had upgraded the windows in his penthouse after that last go round with this god. Otherwise he might have already been shoved through them.

"Look, I'm sorry I upset you, but can you just cut me some fricken slack here?" The billionaire mumbled, face smashed against the wide expanse of glass. The view of course was breathtaking, or perhaps Tony just felt that way because his lungs were being compressed by an angry deity.

"Bottom line, okay?" The inventor slurred, his word causing fog to spread across the cold glass. "I want to be happy, and that's never going to happen if I can't have you in my life. You have no idea how much I've missed you. Seriously, no idea. As Jarvis, he'll tell you. I've been pretty miserable. More so than I usually am at least. You know what? Don't ask him, it will just remind you of what a grumpy prick I can be. Anyhow, that's not important, what is important is that I want you to be happy and I don't think you 'coping' being stranded penniless in Ass Gard for the next four hundred years is going to cut it for you." Tony swallowed, continuing in a small, humbled voice, "And maybe, we don't have a connection right now due to my stupidity, but we *did*, and maybe we could have again if we work at it."

Tony tried not to groan in relief as the pressure on his cheek and shoulder disappeared, Loki's arm instead snaking around his waist. The other arm across his throat wasn't removed, but it did loosen as the trickster's head dropped heavily down to Tony's shoulder. He would have liked to have turned to look at his god, but that wasn't possible with the way the Trickster was holding him, so Tony contented himself with a sideways head bump.

Several minutes later, Tony realized the hand at his waist was rubbing soft little circles against the worn fabric of his t-shirt. As he leaned backwards, both of the arms around him tightened for a long moment. A gentle nuzzling at the crook of his neck accompanied the hug. Tony leaned in even more as he felt warm breath and his god's lips brushing his jawline.

"Honestly, you really have no idea how much I missed you." Tony sighed, melting further against the tall man behind him. He still would have liked to turn, but didn't want to interrupt the almost butterfly wing flutter of the tender little nips Loki was planting up and down the exposed portion of his neck. So they stood there, and if Tony started rocking a bit while Loki's stroking became a bit more focused, well that was no one's business but theirs.

Loki's one hand had slipped under his shirt and was stroking up and down his chest, while the other rested just inside the waist band of Tony's jeans. Losing all track of time, little tendrils of the tension Tony had been carrying for the last year start to unwind deep within him. Every time Loki's hand stoked down his chest, or when the fingers on his other hand dipped low enough to

gently tease the fine strip of hair trailing down from Tony's lower belly, the inventor found himself relaxing even more, so much so that he was in imminent danger of melting into a warm gooey puddle of lusty pleasure at any minute. From fucking cuddling while standing up? How this was even remotely possible, Tony wasn't sure, but he was sure that he didn't want to do anything that might cause Loki to stop.

Since he couldn't turn around, Tony closed his eyes and found his own hands ghosting up and down Loki's arms, delighting in the play of sinewy muscles underneath the thin fabric of the god's dress shirt. As the god stroked from his shoulder blades down to his belly, Tony trailed his own hands almost hypnotically down to Loki's, encouraging the Trickster to dip deeper in to his jeans or to pay more attention to the hardening nubs on his chest.

Tony's mind was almost blessedly blank when he turned his head in response to a series of insistent nips along his jaw and soft kisses pressed to the corner of his mouth.

There was no question that he was letting the god in.

Letting out a happy whine that he would have normally been too mortified to make, Tony's head rolled back bonelessly on Loki's shoulder to allow the god better access to his mouth.

Over the next several minutes, Tony made at least three unsuccessful attempts to turn, so he decided to just fucking go with it. When his eyes drifted back open for a moment, he could see that his god was also lost in the moment.

And if Tony hadn't thought the fucker was stunning before, with the way Loki's dark lashes trembled against his pale skin and all, he certainly did now.

Tony arched his back, trying to claim more of Loki's mouth, rising up into those long fingers which were still busily petting him. By the time Loki pulled away, everything Tony owned was standing at attention.

"Are you expecting me to also warm your bed," Loki asked huskily tightening his arm and holding the engineer firmly against him, finally allowing his hand to be pushed lower into Tony's jeans. Not quite as low as Tony would have liked, but close enough that his breath had hitched in anticipation.

"Oh god please," Tony prayed. It was unintentional, but a prayer none the less.

That he really wanted Loki in his bed later was a given, but right now Tony was pretty sure he was praying for the god's hand to move just that last little bit lower.

Tony licked his lips and rocked his hips unconsciously.

And then Tony's prayers were answered. Slipping his hand out from underneath the inventor's t-shirt, Loki brought it up to delicately stroke along Tony's cheek, turning his face so the god could trace a long finger against Tony's kiss swollen lower lip.

"What was it you bought that day, Stark?" He asked tenderly as long clever fingers finally, finally, thank you Jesus, slipped the rest of the way down, circled his cock and started stroking and pulling lightly on it.

"Oh god. Oh yes. God yes." Tony chanted after a few minutes of finally getting some attention where it was desperately needed.

“You like?” Loki breathed as he twisted his wrist just so.

“Fuck yeah.” The engineer groaned, almost not caring if he even came. After the year Tony’d had, he would be happy to spend the rest of his life standing here, totally fucking blissed out while being kissed and jacked off by his god.

“So, tell me, Tony. What was it you bought that day when you missed our last meeting?”

Eye’s closed Tony’s face screwed up into a tinyfrown, partially from the question but mostly from the tension of chasing down the increased sensations his cock was experiencing. “A golden bronze, mint condition. Nineteen Fifty-four Oldsmobile. An F-88.”

“Hummm?”

“A car. A convertible. A type of car whose roof that folds down,” Tony gasped out answering the unasked, but implied question. Loki’s fingers dipping down to briefly cup his balls. “A concept car, only three were ever made.”

“Ah. Was it worth it?” Loki asked his intent expression at odds with the light tone in his voice.

“No.” Huffing, Tony bit his lower lip, rolling his hips against the god’s palm, “The minute... Ah... I realized what I had done... It wasn’t worth it.”

Loki kissed his temple, “So what is going to happen to this unworthy car now?” the god whispered into his ear.

“Umm... I don’t know... Ahhhhh...” Brows knitted in concentration, unable to slouch down because of the hand cupping his chin, the engineer rotated his hips, whining softly, because those wonderfully talented fingers were still cupping his balls and not applying pressure higher up his cock, where he really, really fucking needed it.

“Focus, Stark.” The god told him, neither his voice nor his fingers were as soft and caressing as they had been even a moment ago. “I asked, what is going to happen to this unworthy car now?”

“Hey!” He yelped, trying abortively to get away from the cruel fingers clamped around an area important to his happiness. If he had to be honest, Tony would have to say it was more the vise-like grip on his balls rather than Loki’s change in tone that finally got his attention.

Loki’s voice was now as hard as the metal Tony had made his first suit with. “For the third time Stark, what is going to happen to this unworthy car now? The one you were out buying while I waited all night for you to return.”

Oh. Shit.

This was not good. This was so far from not good, Tony wasn’t even sure it was a distance that could be measured. Aching, and not just from the god’s grip on his balls, he figured he only had one chance to get this right or he was going to be shortly hitting some octaves that would have every dog in the city howling.

“I’m going to auction it off and donate the money to a charity in your name?” Tony asked in a faltering voice, his expression pained with just a dash of panic.

Loki’s head titled considering this. From the way the god’s eyes narrowed, Tony was pretty sure this was not the answer he had been looking for. However, since no important body parts had yet been pulled off, Tony was counting himself lucky right now.

“And that compensates me how?” the god almost spat.

Or maybe not so lucky.

Grimacing, Tony said, “Umm, it doesn’t.” He tensed, cringing at the possibility of what damage those long, strong. Oh god. So, so strong, fingers could do to him.

“No. It doesn’t,” Loki’s fingers twitched, Tony hissed as the ones below tightened slightly and the ones on his face dug in to keep him from moving. Hard green eyes bored into Tony’s wide amber ones. “I think this unworthy car should be painted in my colors, and transferred to me, as my personal vehicle. I have always wanted to learn how to operate a Midgardian conveyance.”

If Tony felt any pain at having to desecrate the original paint job of such a classic car and then turning it over to someone just learning how to drive, it was nothing compared to the pain of his throbbing, now totally forgotten cock, and his cruelly compressed balls.

“I think, that’s a great idea,” Tony gasped, working hard to keep his voice from sliding up into the soprano range.

Chapter End Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Stella!

Fyi - The last time an F-88 Oldsmobile came up for sale it sold for 3.5mil. I figured Loki deserved something nice.

I was blown away by the wonderful comments I got last time, and the feeling that, yes Loki is going to go off at least a bit, was, I thought a valid one. Of course the whole Loki and Tony need to learn not to fight about everything was also a good point. Are they done fighting yet? I'm not sure. Was this enough? Does Loki feel like he counted coup enough to try something different? Does he think Tony still has some 'splaning to do?

Public Service Announcement - The whole smashing people up against window, either in rage or to have sexy times... Lest anyone get any ideas, I do warn you that it could be dangerous if you don't have bullet-proof windows or the ability to fly. So please, write fanfiction responsibly and keep that in mind.

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TRIGGER WARNINGS

This chapter will * contain* - Mature Subject Matter and F/M sex. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Most of it will not be graphic except maybe the smut if I can manage it, but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic.

Please DO NOT READ if you will have issues with any of these items.

Are we good?

Chapter Summary

Tony and Loki are still trying to work through their differences. Possibly they need a class in how to do this in a healthy way.

Chapter Notes

Thanks to everyone who commented and gave me their thoughts on how things were going. I appreciate all your insights!

Beta'd by the incomparable Stella, two thumbs way UP! You Rock.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 14 – Are we good?

“I think, that’s a great idea,” Tony gasped, working hard to keep his voice from sliding up into the soprano range.

A soft kiss was placed on his temple and the cruel fingers digging into his face and testicles loosened. “Even though I did not agree to it, I don't believe in giving should be one sided. In exchange for the car, I will listen with an open mind to whatever excuses you think I need to hear.” Loki told him matter-of-factly as he unwound his arms from Tony’s body and stepped away from him. “Would you like to tell me them now?”

What? Using both hands against the window for balance, Tony looked over his shoulder as the god walked towards the couch.

“Seriously?” A few of the octaves he’d managed to suppress while his balls were being flattened snuck into Tony’s tone. “You’re stopping?”

Where the hell is he going? Discomfort from the blood rushing back to his balls, and pain from the blood currently throbbing in his now ignored, and more than ready cock, caught Tony in mid-turn and caused him to bend over in distress.

Fuck that hurt!

After taking a few deep breaths, Tony managed to stand more or less upright, his face only slightly contorted. “You’re, you’re not going to help me out with this, are you?” He asked, waving a hand vaguely in front of his groin.

Loki smiled, lips curled in an expression that was somewhere between delighted and vindictive. "You truly are a genius, Stark." A shapely brow rose in amusement, "I am constantly in awe of your understanding of subtle nuances. "

"Yeah, and you truly are a cock tease," Tony retorted somewhat bitterly. "Which, honestly, should come as no surprise to me, I've known it since the first night we went clubbing together." He waved his right hands a few times like he was shooing away a particularly annoying mosquito. "Fine. I'm fine, don't worry about me, I'll take care of it myself."

Now both brows rising almost to his hairline with interest, Loki's grin became positively Cheshire-like.

"Very funny, asshole. Not now, obviously, this is why men have shower mitts."

"Ah. Well, enjoy *yourself* then."

Tony made a face in acknowledgment of the bad pun. "Look, before I," He waved southwards again, "I need to know. What's it going to take for you to see the docs without any fuss?"

A calculating look danced across Loki's green eyes, before being banished by such a sweet smile, that Tony knew the god was going to fuck with him.

And not in the fun way.

"I have no objection to seeing Banner and Vaslin. That is why I was allowed to journey here, after all."

"Oh, very accommodating there, Professor Snape." Tony groused, turning back towards the center of the living room, not even trying to hide his attempts to rearrange himself a bit less painfully. Hell, it wasn't like Loki didn't know he had a major wood, the fucker had put it there. "What about the psychiatrists?"

"When I explained to you that I had no intention of telling some unknown mortal my personal business, which words escaped your comprehension, Stark?" His tone suddenly as cold as a November rain, Loki drew himself up to this full height and looked disdainfully at Tony.

It was days like today that made escaping to the bottom of a bottle look very appealing. Bambi hadn't even been up for an hour and Tony was already looking at their second fight. Not that this was any kind of a record or anything. Hell, Tony and Pepper could have already been on number four or five by now. Depending, of course, on how much sleep he hadn't had, and what bullshit company crap she was trying to force him to do. However, he was going to do better than that now. Lest his hot Nordic god eviscerate him, or worse, refuse to talk to him again.

So, Rudolf was riding the mood swing. Lord knows if anyone deserved to be on the damn thing today, it was him.

With absolutely no sense of self-preservation, Tony went and stood in front of Loki. The inventor didn't have to look down to avoid making eye contact. Not with his god being a good six fucking inches taller than he was. Plus those damn Space Viking boots he was rocking? Call it seven inches.

Lower lip gripped against his teeth, Tony stood close enough that he could reach out his right hand and brush his knuckles gently along the Trickster's forearm a few times. After a moment, he raised his hand a bit and patted Loki's bicep. Sneaking a look up he was not encouraged by the expression on the god's face. "Lo, please. You need some help, could you maybe please be

reasonable about this?"

The god's face tightened. "I am being reasonable; I don't need to see that kind of healer." Loki said irritably, moving away from the hand on his arm.

"Please?" Was that a plea? Yes. Yes, it was. And you know what? The great Tony Stark was not the least bit ashamed of begging if it got him what he wanted. Hell, he whined in a heartbeat, so begging to get what he desired was not that much more of a step as far as he was concerned.

"No!" The god snapped, taking a few steps back. "Why should I? They aren't even true healers, they just talk."

Tony's eyes popped wide open. *And wasn't that pretty much word for word what he'd told Pepper when she tried to get him to go see a shrink.*

Trailing after him, Tony lifted his head, looking straight up at the pissed-off god. "Okay. Well, how about because, and I'm not trying to start a fight here..." Tony took a deep breath and then just went for it. "How about because you are just a teensy bit mentally unstable?"

Not surprisingly, Loki puffed up like an angry cat.

Okay, so he sucked at this sensitive stuff, Tony thought. *Hopefully he would still get points for trying.* Raising his hands placatingly, he hurried on, "Which is totally understandable with what you have been through. And yes, most of them do just talk, but some of them, one of yours in fact, can prescribe medication if ne-- " And now his god was hissing like an angry cat. Tony thoughts quickly flashed to the little emergency tin of Mortal Nip nestled in his pocket and then, just as quickly, banished the idea.

"You're not the personification of mental stability either Stark!" Loki snarled, continuing to back around the couch. "Yet, you don't see one of these 'Mental Healers' ... These... *Psychiatrists!*"

Who knew Psychiatrist could be used as a swear word?

"Look, if I had your load dumped on me," Tony put his right hand on his chest, just above his old reactor site. "I'd be seeing one, I guarantee you."

Loki's entire body stiffened with rage, waves of fury practically rolling off of him.

"Liar!"

One word, as hard and as final as one of Thor's lightning strikes. "That is a *lie*. I've heard Ms. Potts tell you dozens of times you should see one of these *Psychiatrists*." The god spat, again using the four syllables as a curse. Tony opened his mouth, but before he could get anything out, Loki shouted at him. "So if *you*... As unstable as *you* are, don't have to see these doctors, then why should I?"

Busted. Completely and totally busted. Which seemed to be the story of his life recently. He couldn't catch a break if he used a bucket.

"Look..." Tony said trailing off while he marshalled a decent argument. He was trying to keep his voice level, but it wasn't easy. Partly because his adrenaline was up from the shouting of course, and partly because the sight of Loki angry again made him anxious. But mostly because he was trying his best and, right now, his best just wasn't cutting it, which sucked. And finally, because of the memories of his distress during that time when Pepper had been hounding him to see a shrink, always sent him border-line panicky. When he felt like this, he wanted to shoot someone, and since

the Ten Rings were dead, that just left the author of a lot of his current distress... Odin.

Not going there, he told himself firmly. Reluctantly he turned away from the mental image of going to Asgard to have a 'chat' with the All Fucker while wearing his God Buster suit.

"Look, I'm not going to force you. It won't work if you don't agree willingly, but I wish--"

Holy fuck!

Black Mamba's had nothing on his petulant prince when it came to striking speed. Without registering any movement, Tony was flying across the room again, slamming painfully into the wall below the bar. "Will you fucking quit that?!" He yelled, sliding down the wall onto the equally hard floor.

"Sir?" Jarvis called anxiously.

"Shut it, Jarvis," Tony growled, struggling to both stay calm, and to get on his feet before his dazzlingly good looking, half-insane god, decided to toss him in another direction. "Look, Kaa, could you please quit throwing me around the room?"

Tony clasped his hands together. It just happened, okay? It wasn't like he wasn't going to tuck them under his chin or anything girly like that. *Fuck it, they ended up there anyhow*. Girly looking or not, he was going with it, pleading wise; it just felt right. "Please? I'm asking nicely." Not that Tony staying calm and being polite was having a likewise effect on the dark haired embodiment of extreme pissy-ness that was currently rounding the end of the couch and headed his way.

"Like you didn't force this ridiculous partnership upon me?" Loki all but screamed. Veins were standing out on his neck and forehead, most likely more from repressing his need to go ballistic rather than from him screaming. "Like you've never once hesitated to use force or drugs to make me conform to what you wanted?" He snatched up the mate to the lamp he'd thrown earlier and fired it at Tony's head. Fortunately this time, the engineer had been expecting something like this and was able to dive out of the way.

So many of Tony's chickens were coming home to roost right now, it was like a fucking Alfred Hitchcock movie. And Loki was the hawk swooping down on the flock, or in this case, Tony. Using one of his fucking ninja dance moves, the god whirled in, snagged Tony's arm and twisted it behind his back again, a move that was becoming very old as far as Tony was concerned, before spinning him out into the room again to collide with a large angular occasional chair. *That hurt like a mo-fo*. He really needed to tell his interior designers to go fuck themselves, forget the modern look and get him some furniture that wouldn't hurt to be forced over, thrown onto, or tossed at. The stupid bastards obviously had no idea how to pick furniture with the needs of an active billionaire in mind. A frequently-thrown-around active billionaire, anyhow.

Tony had only half scrambled to his feet when Loki started yelling again.

"Don't think I don't know you have that stupid Thrall Relaxant somewhere close at hand, Stark!" Loki growled, somehow sliding up from behind Tony and shoving him forcefully sideways.

Possibly it was also time to also forgo the stone floors and get a nice plush carpet with lots of padding. The 'bots would hate it, but it would make rolling halfway across the room a touch less painful.

Rocking quickly onto his back, Tony hastily raised his hands in supplication before Loki could grab him again.

“No. I mean yes. Okay, I do. But Lo, please, I’m begging you. I wouldn’t be pushing for this if I didn’t think it was the right thing to do.” Clambering to his knees, Tony pleaded, trying to pack every bit of persuasion and contriteness he could into this voice, expression, and hell, even his posture. Even including the clasped hands under this chin, granted they hadn’t worked the last time he tried them, but he’s give them one more chance.

“Please Lo. I’ll do *anything*, if you’d just agree to see them. Bambi, I can’t tell you how important this is. Please, please, *please*, trust me on this; I’m talking from personal experience. You *need* to do this.”

Loki stopped in mid-stride, his head jerking hard to one side.

OooooO

It hurt to breath. The very air Loki took in seemed to cause a racking shudder as it entered his lungs. His head, of course, was pounding. Granted it was a bit early in his day for his headaches to start, but it was totally possible, what with him having to deal with this mouthy little mortal the second he opened his eyes. Jarvis. It was all Jarvis’ fault. Had he not been watching like Stark’s own private Heimdall, Loki could have laid in bed for who knows how long, luxuriating in the wake of the most peaceful night’s sleep he’d had in years. While he most certainly did not appreciate Stark drugging him, or waking up in a strange bed in a different realm, Loki had to admit that after the day’s revelations, he would not have slept a minute without the medication. It was going to take time to come to terms with all of his new found knowledge, and he doubted if he would get much sleep at all until he did.

And now.

Much as he really wanted to toss Stark across his vulgar living room, breaking absolutely every tasteless mass produced item in it, he didn’t. He needed to stop. Regardless of how much he wanted to utterly destroy *something*... He really did need to stop. Truthfully, Loki knew he shouldn’t have started in the first place. Yes, Stark was annoyingly complacent, to the point of inspiring rage, and he had turned Loki’s life upside down without even asking him his wishes on the matter. However, he wasn’t the main cause of his woes, and Loki needed to be very careful about alienating the one person who now controlled his future.

Holding his clenched hands against his thighs, he noticed Stark relaxing slightly, having recognized that bit of restraint as a sign that Loki was going to forgo the pleasure of a full-on confrontation with him. Scowling at the mouthy little ironmonger still crouched on the floor; with much effort, Loki let his hands relax and drop to his sides. Taking a step back, the god tipped his head up, looking down his nose at Stark, his lips pressed in a thin line of displeasure.

“Lo?”

“How badly do you want me to do this, Stark?” He asked through gritted teeth.

“Tony. You used to call me Tony. And I want it very badly. What do you want? Anything you want if you just go see the head doctors.”

“Anything? Very well.”Loki gave him a slightly shark-like version of his reassuring smile, and since Stark knew damn good and well how upset Loki was, he was not the least bit reassured. This made him considerably smarter than Thor, who has never failed to misinterpret that particular smile as genuine reassurance.

“I want you to go see them also. And since this is something you should already be doing

according to Ms. Potts, it will also cost you something. One item, whatever I want no matter what it costs.”

Stark was not pleased. But it wasn't like Loki particularly cared. The god didn't really care if Stark was happy, he just needed to keep from angering the man any more than he unfortunately already had.

Heaving a deep sigh, Stark replied, “Look, a shopping spree, I'm fine with it as long as you don't try to buy an army, or a planet, or anything like that. No problem there. Okay? We're fine there. But I can't go with you to see the doctor, your sessions have to be private, this isn't me saying it, the docs insisted.”

“How convenient for you,” Loki sneered, “since you don't want to go see them in the first place. You did say you would do anything, did you not?” A wide, totally insincere smile spread across his face. “Let's see if that was a lie or not, shall we?” he asked with mock cheer. “I will see them separately; you will see them separately, and if *they* deem it necessary, we will see them together. Those are my terms, Stark, take them or leave them, it makes no difference to me.”

Folding his arms, the god let his lips twist up in a tiny smirk.

Stark grabbed the back of one of the side chairs he was standing beside. He looked like a fish out of water with the way he kept opening and closing his mouth, obviously unsuccessful in thinking up a rebuttal that might work. Loki's grin widened and became much more genuine now that he was not the only one who might be forced to do things they would rather not.

Then placing his hands behind his back, Loki took several long strides across the room, keeping a sidelong watch on the stricken mortal. “How important did you say this was again?” he asked, not bothering to hide how his lips quivered with suppressed mirth. Loki's gift for seeing the dark humor of almost any setback, while possibly not appreciated by... Well, almost everyone, was still, at the end of the day, the only thing that kept him sane sometimes. It was a private balm that he seldom allowed others to see, but he knew Stark would appreciate it. Or at any rate, recognize the enjoyment that Loki was getting from watching the mortal be caught in a web of his own careless words.

Before he got too far away to enjoy the expressions flitting across Stark's face, he turned and began pacing back to his original starting point, never taking his eyes off the mortal. “However, I must tell you, this offer is only good for the next thirty seconds, Stark, and so I'll have your answer now if you please. We either both go, or neither of us goes.” Nose wrinkling in apparent good humor, he asked, “Which shall it be, I wonder?”

OoooO

How the fuck was this his life? Tony asked himself for possibly the millionth time.

What in the *hell* possessed him to say he'd do anything? Why hadn't he said he'd buy him anything instead? Although, a shopping spree was also added to the mix, shouldn't that be enough? It wasn't bad enough that Loki had thrown him all over the fucking place, now he was being strong armed into seeing a shrink? Something that he wouldn't do even for Pepper?

Inner agitation was translated into a jittery little bounce as Tony fumed. *What the fuck? Honestly. What. The. Fuck.* He wasn't sure which bothered him the most. The seeing the shrink part or blowing a negotiation like some kind of rank newbie part. From now, he was making all his offers

to the Asgardian version of Alan Shore in writing, *and* only after Pepper and his attorneys had fucking signed off on them.

“Decision time, Stark.” Loki said, again lifting a brow mockingly.

“Fine. Fuck it, yes.” Tony huffed, making a face that clearly showed his joy at being out maneuvered when he had started with all the damn cards.

Giving him a smile of gentle good humor, which was as false as a caring inquiry from Odin, the god cooed, “I am sure if nothing else, you can discuss with the good doctors how unreasonable you feel I am.”

Tony grimaced momentarily. If he had anything to say about it, and he did, that was all he was going to talk to the damn shrinks about.

“So. Lo. You got all that throwing people around shit out of your system now?”

“Have you decided to stop being annoying?” Loki asked, his tone and the height of his eyebrows clearly indicating that he thought that an impossibility.

Which Tony would have to agree with. However, along with being perpetually annoying, he also believed in being pro-active. While this had led to some of his biggest successes, research wise, he wasn’t too sure how it was going to go down ten minutes from now.

“Okay, fine. Is it out of your system for right this minute, at least? What I want to know, right now, is have you got all that shit out of your system? Are you ready to calm your ass down? Are you done?”

“I still want the car, Stark.”

“Yes. Fine. Take the damn car,” Tony said, drifting over towards him. “I’ll gold plate the fucking fenders for you. That way it will look good when you rip out the transmission learning how to shift gears. But the question I have for you now is... Are.You.Done.”

“I guess so, although it was fun. For me, anyway.”

“Don’t kid yourself, I was right there with you. But answer the question, are you done now?”

“I suppose so.”

“Jesus Christ, Lo! I don’t want to hear ‘I suppose’ or ‘I guess’,” Tony hissed even though he was trying not to get angry. He need to stay calm, because he wasn’t really, nor was the dick move he was getting ready to pull born of anger. “Are you done tossing me around this morning? Are we good now? Yes or fucking no?”

“Fine. *Yes*. For right now, I am done and we are good.”

Loki started minutely at the regret that flicked across Tony’s face, narrowing his eyes in wary puzzlement as resigned determination took its place on the engineer’s features.

Tony sagged a moment, noting out of the corner of his eye how that caused Loki to relax a bit, before spinning around behind him and sweeping the god’s feet out from under him.

There was a flurry of quick moves that Tony just bulled his way through, he knew his one chance at winning against Ninja Dance God required him to get Loki into a good solid back mount before

the god realized that he was actually a threat.

A moment later, they had both fallen to the hard fucking floor, plush rugs, looking better to Tony by the minute, and he was wrapped around his god like a tortilla.

“Now.” Tony gasped, winded from a few rib strikes that were a little too hard for comfort. His lock across the Trickster’s throat, almost to the point of causing unconsciousness in the dark man he’d immobilized. “I would like to say that I’m only going to do this once. But you know and I know you are too stubborn a bastard to accept this as anything but a fluke unless I do it again someday. Although... I may not yet have been given your Ass-gard strength yet, that doesn’t mean I’m weak. I worked on an important side project shortly after you handed me my ass that first time and, as a result, I’m a lot fucking stronger than you might recall.”

His breathing harsh and angry, Loki shifted a bit, but stopped when Tony tightened his grip fractional.

“So.” He continued in a conversational tone. “The reason you pinned me to the sofa? Because I let you. I didn’t want to get in an all-out brawl and hurt you. Or get hurt myself for that matter. And... I figure I deserved most of what happened for being such a shit.”

An angry, disbelieving snort and a skeptical sidelong glare was the only response he got from Loki.

Busted yet again.

“And yes...” Tony admitted without shame, because honestly when it came to stuff like this he had none, “I do occasionally enjoy crap like that, so fucking sue me.” Loki huffed derisively. “But I figure we’re even now, so if you try a dick move like that again without asking me first, I will fuck you up.”

“Literally.”

“As in, not in the fun way.”

The god’s acid humor drained instantly away and Loki went very still and rigid in his grip. Tony could almost see how every muscle group tensed up. He honestly felt bad for pulling this power play right now, while his god was still very broken. But, even mortal Loki was way too good a fighter for him to keep trying throwing and pushing Tony when he was frustrated. They both had tempers. And like Loki, when he was mad, he had a hard time restraining himself. The big difference now was Tony’s very real Fear that Loki would catch him in a bad mood, which admittedly was sometimes easily done, or really hurt Tony prompting an unconscious automatic response with all of his strength behind it. That could be disastrous given Loki’s now mortal body.

“You, my friend, need to work on expressing your frustration in a more socially acceptable, and less painful to others manner. And I obviously need to work on my communications skills, since you still don’t have a fucking clue on how much I want you to be happy.”

“And nothing says I want you to be happy like someone dragging you to the floor and applying a choke hold, does it, Stark?” Loki growled shifting, obviously furious that he’d been taken down by a mere mortal, even if Tony was not-so-mere anymore.

“You understand? No more physical violence from *either of us*, okay?”

“I really, really hate you.” Loki said, his voice hard and vicious. Tony’s heart tightened painfully.

“No, you don’t, Dasher. You haven’t for years; you’re just pissed at me. It’s okay. I’m used to my nearest and dearest being pissed at me. I bring that out in people. It’s a gift.”

There was no answer, just the sound of a pinned down god of mischief sighing as if in agreement.

“Now. I am sorry... We are going to get cleaned up, get the fasting samples Bruce wants, and then get something to eat. Maybe some decent food will help both our moods. And this afternoon after you see Bruce and Vaslin, we can go down to the garage, you can check out your new car, and pick out the exact color you want me to desecrate it with.”

Tony would have liked to suggest *other* activities for later in the evening, but he was pretty sure those would not be too well received at this particular moment.

Maybe tomorrow night?

Chapter End Notes

Most peeps thought that Loki would still be freaking and I have to say I agreed with them. He still is not exactly on program with what is going on, but from his point of view things look very different.

While I don't necessarily agree with how Tony decided to let Loki know they needed to quit with the physical stuff when angry, I do think that he had some valid fears of the injuries that could occur if they continued.

Oh... Looky... Visitors next chapter. I wonder who?

As always **comments and reviews are greatly appreciated**, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

*******TRIGGER**

WARNINGS*****

This chapter will *contain * - **Possible Domestic Violence**. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Most of it will not be graphic except maybe the smut if I can manage it, but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please **DO NOT READ** if you will have issues with any of these items.*****

Shrink

Chapter Summary

Fun for all at Stark Towers as one set of doctors finishes up and the new set moves in.

And just in time for Christmas 2014 a lovely drawing by Loveallcats13 of Loki for Queens Grace - Chapter 18.

Please check it out. <http://archiveofourown.org/works/2833421>

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the o'so wonderful incredibly FAST Stella! Can I get a whoop-whoop for her?

Note – I am not a mental health care professional. I have only three times seen a therapist before she decided I was not the one that needed to be seen... So having said that please be aware that I am pulling this stuff out of thin air based on popular knowledge and what I have gleamed from friends, co-workers and relatives who have spent time with therapists and psychiatrists. If I get stuff wrong it is not from malice but more from the fact that no two people I have spoken with seemed to have had the same experience when getting assistance for their problems. So if there is a preferred protocol, apparently it is not followed very much so I feel pretty safe in assuming that Loki and Tony's docs would be winging it is not only due to the billionaire genius/alien prince situation, but also due to the fluid method of treatment from one professional to the next as they tailor their sessions to vastly different types of people and problems. Please don't flame me.

Note Note - Next week in honor of the holidays.... We will have humor! Yes, something sorely lacking of late. Not only will it be more light hearted, but *gasp* it will actually mesh with the story line! Go figure.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 15

Feet tucked up in front of him, the tower's resident god was sitting in a oversized brown leather chair. Loki was of course *'properly'* dressed in a white dress shirt, grey vest and matching slacks, but looked decidedly tired. From the way the chair had been partially turned to allow him a better view of the window, his features were visible as a sharp profile. Currently, Loki was staring out at the city, but from his fixed expression he probably wasn't actually seeing anything. The weak winter sun and the watery streaks of over cast clouds might have been responsible for his pale washed out skin tones, but Tony didn't think they were.

“Rough session, huh?” Tony asked quietly, leaning against rail overlooking the living room. Loki didn’t as much as twitch. He just continued to stare, apparently so lost in thought that not only was the view not registering with him, but neither was Tony’s voice.

OoooO

According to Jarvis, after the trio had come to an agreement in principal and had it refined, vetted and signed with the immediate assistance of Tony’s head legal team, the god had spent the rest of the first day providing background information for the doctors. Calling it quits about six o’clock, Rozmon and Schafer retreated to the guest floor to plan their strategy and do whatever shrinks do to prep for the next day, while Loki had crawled off to his room without saying a word to anyone. If it hadn’t been for Jarvis using Minion to send a tray to Loki’s room, the god would have most likely gone to bed after he showered without eating anything at all. Not that he did more than pick listlessly at his meal before crawling under the comforter.

The second day, Tony hadn’t seen his god at all. Admittedly he’d been busy working on crap Pepper had left for him, and then a long assed session with Pepper and his legal team. By the time he’d gotten back up to the penthouse, Loki was already asleep. He’d apparently spent the day showering, napping, slinking around the edges of the penthouse like a feral cat, or having sessions with one set of doctors or the other. The only reason he’d eaten at all was that every time Loki went in the shower, Jarvis would have a food delivered to his room.

“Fatigue is normal, Tony,” Bruce assured him soothingly over the phone. “Vaslin is monitoring him during all the session breaks to make sure the meds we’re giving him keep him within target ranges for his heart rate and blood pressure, and he’s taking samples to make sure his epinephrine and cortisol stay controlled. He just had a major load dumped on him. Frankly, I’m amazed he’s even willing to get out of bed, let alone do multiple sessions with the other team.”

“Are you sure, Bruce?” Tony asked worried. “I mean, he was out for the count by seven yesterday and he apparently is taking a shower or a nap every chance he gets.”

“It’s fine, Tony. He’ll surface once he’s able to get a handle on everything. In the meantime, just leave him alone.”

“If you say so.”

“I do say so.” Bruce said sternly, or as sternly as the ever so polite Bruce could. “Unless he comes to you for something, just leave the poor guy alone. He’s dealing with a lot of stress right now, don’t you add any more to it.”

That third day, Tony had problems of his own to deal with. After finding Loki gazing unseeingly out the windows after an early morning session, Tony got to deal with the shrinks in his own session. Shrinks who apparently didn’t appreciate being referred to as *Alfred Bellows* and *Sidney Freedman* or even the *Self-Motivation Duo*. Okay, so the second one was kind of an obscure Shrink inspired rif on old Batman re-runs, but Tony had gotten up late that morning and wasn’t exactly firing on all cylinders, so leaving his pensive god, he went grab some coffee so he could get his own scheduled torture started.

OoooO

As he was running late, Tony hadn’t even finished with his first cup of coffee when he breezed into his library. *Well, actually, everything in it had previously been in his mother’s library, but it was in his tower now, so that made it his, right?* The classically appointed but seldom used room had been repurposed for the exclusive use of the Crane Brothers. Two large brown leather

wingbacks, each with their own gilded, burlled wood side table, now faced the massive tufted leather couch.

Tony stopped dead, blinking at the bright royal blue fleece blanket neatly folded over the back of the café au lait couch. An equally repulsive square pillow made out of the same material sat in front of it. While he could not be one hundred percent sure, the eighties after all were a bit of a blur to him; Tony was willing to bet major money that nothing of that color had ever been bought by him, at least not while he was sober. The incongruity of those two items in his mother's library woke him up more than his coffee would have.

"Good Morning, Mister Stark." Rosman, was a moderately built man about sixty, he had a full head of silver-gray hair which he was currently nodding towards the couch, "If you would like to sit down, we can get started." His current partner, the pudgy, slightly balding Doctor Schafer, standing in front of the other wingback, smiled a little doctor smile at him.

"You realize I'll own you, and your great grandchildren, until hell freezes over if one word of any of this gets out, yes?" Tony queried belligerently, not yet moving any further into the room. "And I don't want one word written about this unless it is on the secured laptops I've supplied you."

"We do understand the security concerns, Mister Stark, and your perfectly natural desire to keep your personal issues private," Schafer assured him in an overly soothing voice that made Tony want to smack him.

Tony was totally not looking forward to this. And not just because he loathed with every fiber of his being the fact that he'd been roped into this. No. He also hated it because he knew that Loki had used his sessions to lay landmines that Tony was sure to have to deal with.

OoooO

It had been after a silent breakfast on that first day that Tony had realized that his dark god was the personification of Malicious Obedience. "So, in exchange for the shopping spree, you're going to cooperate with the head doctors, right?"

"No." Loki said serenely not bothering to look up from the fork he was toying with. "The '*shopping spree*', as you put it, is just for me to tolerate their presence and that deal is still contingent upon you also consulting with them about your own problems."

"I don't know, Lo, I pretty sure it's also for you to play nice." Tony replied, not believing for a moment that him saying this was going to make a lick of difference, but deciding it wouldn't hurt to try.

Loki tossed Tony a viciously smug look, "With all your wealth, Tony Stark, you do not have enough gold to make *me* play nice. However, tolerate their presence that I can and have agreed to do."

It took a lot of effort, but Tony managed not to roll his eyes, at least not physically. "Fine. Be that way, don't play nice. But you do have to at the very least be honest with them and tell them the truth when they ask you stuff."

Pushing aside his still half full plate away from him, a tiny curl tugged at Loki's lips, the first smile that Tony had seen since their altercation in the living room a few hours earlier.

"Tell the truth? According to one of your favorite sagas, the '*truth*' depends greatly on our own point of view."

Yeah, Obi Wan. Got that. “How about just your truth. Not what you suspect or what you might project onto the actions of others, but what you actually feel or have seen with your own eyes.”

“I doubt very much if you really want me to tell this mortal everything that has happened between us.”

“See, that’s where you’re wrong. I want you to do exactly that.”

“Everything, Stark?” Loki lifted a shapely brow skeptically, his expression obviously reflecting his feelings on the wisdom of doing that. “I wonder if you know what you ask for.”

“Oh believe me, Lo. I am well aware of what kind of thoughts you might share with the good doctor in private. But as much as I hate to admit it, this isn’t going to work for either of us if it starts out with lies and omissions. And much as I might like to avoid a few things on my part, it’s hardly fair to ask you to open up to these guys about the things that bother you while at the same time asking you not to talk about stuff that might bother me.”

And yes, Tony knew that he was setting himself up for more grief that he could handle from the docs. Or for that matter, judging by the thoughtfully blank look he was getting, from Loki. It sucked being the adult in a relationship... It sucked worse when he knew that the older yet younger guy in front of him could probably pull it off with no effort at all. If he chose to, which he apparently doesn’t, right this minute.

“Very well, Stark, so long as you do the same.” The god drawled slowly, his voice and expression clearly asking Tony if he was sure. “I just want you to remember, when this is finished, that it was your idea that we do this.”

Chuckling ruefully, Tony shook his head. “No. Actually it was my idea that ‘you’ do this.” Loki opened his mouth to protest, but Tony waved him back to silence. “But if ‘*both of us*’ is what it takes to get you to cooperate, then ‘*both of us*’ will do it. You absolutely sure I can’t talk you into going solo?” While he privately didn’t think there was, he wouldn’t be Tony Stark if he didn’t try one last time. “You got a car now. You want a small plane? Or maybe a nice cozy little yacht? I can easily see this as being worth a fifty footer.”

An idea that didn’t fly, or rather, float, as far as the Trickster was concerned, not that Tony had actually thought it would.

That, of course, left Tony sitting here on the third day, next to that horrible fuzzy blue pillow, while Doctors Capa and Moore watched him trying not to fidget. Reframing from rubbing a hand nervously across the back of his neck, Tony muttered, “I have no clue how this is going to work out.”

However, it didn’t take him long to be assured that badly... Badly was how it was going to work out. Tony tried to tell them about Loki’s suicide attempts and fill them in on the god’s poisoned relationship with his not-parents, but they seemingly weren’t interested.

“Indeed, Mister Stark. That information was in the packet provided to us from Doctor Banner. What we would like to concentrate on now are a few things that Mister Ingensønn has mentioned as a concern of his.”

Ingensønn? Where the fuck had that come from, Tony wondered. *And wasn’t that name going to go over like a brick balloon if Loki insisted on using it in Asgard.*

He did not sigh. Nor did Tony roll his eyes. Well okay he did, but only mentally. Outwardly he put

on his best, *‘of course I’m interested in hearing what you have to say’* face. That apparently worked as well on the docs as it did on Pepper. Which is to say, not at all.

Peering at Tony like he was a particularly interesting exhibit at the zoo, from the genus *‘Tragice iniquum spurium’** perhaps, Rozmon waited until he had eased back a bit more on the couch before giving him an annoyingly understanding look and saying, “What we would like to know is how you view your own abuse of alcohol?”

Which had, amazingly enough, turned out to be one of the lighter moments of his session. Tony was only thirty minutes into his when he wondered how the hell his godling had endured having more than one of these a week, let alone two a day.

It was a fucking whupping. Not that he had been previously unaware of his occasional inclination towards masochism, but indulging once in a while in that kink was one thing. Paying these two jerks, even at the Loki’s negotiated reduced rate, to beat him about the head and shoulders on the topic of his drinking, philandering, PTSD and narcissistic tendencies was entirely another.

Apparently, he was also lacking in empathy, and that was not going to mesh well with Prince Psychopath’s overly manipulative competitive nature, latent destructive tendencies and massive identity issues. And they haven’t even gotten to Tony’s own daddy issues or Loki’s second hand, informed of but not remembered PTSD.

“Frankly, the sheer number and combination of problems that you and Mister Ingensønn have to deal with indicate some explosive problems in your future.”

“Funny you should say that.” Tony said with a grin that drifted more towards a grimace as he recalled what Bruce had claimed all those years about the Avengers being more of a bomb than a team.

After reminding him yet again that he and Loki had both signed HIPAA forms allowing them to discuss each other in private sessions, Rozmon then proceeded to lay the bomb on him.

“While of course not what we are commonly used to in this country, I do understand that arranged marriages among the ruling class are common in Mister Ingensønn’s culture, but I have to warn you, this is going to be a difficult obstacle for you to overcome with him already having trust issues. Not that you don’t have your own problems in that area, according to the background information we’ve received on you. However, we do feel that the first thing you both need to work on is reframing the nature of your currently relationship. Which, at present, Mister Ingensønn has described in terms very similar to that between a prostitute and a john,” Rozmon cleared his throat, “Although that is not exactly how he put it.”

Tony wanted to groan, his imagination supplying him with plenty of examples of how the silver tongued god might have described the current situation they were in, each thought more horrifying than the last.

Looking down at his notes, Rozmon said, “However, he has specifically mentioned that he has been bought and sold.”

As the beat down continued, Tony was almost ready to give up booze and engineering to take up a life of quiet contemplation, on the edge of a mountain somewhere, if they would just let him leave. He felt unsettled, unclean and exhausted, mentally and physically. He could totally understand why Loki, whose sessions were double the length his were, disappeared after each one for a shower and a nap.

I could certainly use a nap right now, Tony thought forlornly, thinking sadly that in all the years he'd known the god, they had never had the luxury of taking a nap together. Not to do anything, nothing like that, but just for the comfort of knowing that someone you cared, who cared about you, was so close.

"Mister Stark, are you aware that your partner professes to hate you?"

Jerked out of his daydream of sleeping comfortably curled around his god, the engineer couldn't help but be a bit defensive. "Yeah? Well, that makes sense. He has a problem with authority, and right now I am the authority, so I can see how he would be pissed. And I did drug the guy, twice in one evening."

Professionally blank, Doctor Schafer looked up from his notes. "He did mention that. You do know, Mister Stark, that is not exactly how one promotes trust in a relationship."

No shit Sherlock, Tony wanted to tell him. "You think I don't know that? However, most people having a complete psychotic meltdown don't have parents with dungeons full of sadistic prison guards and a low tolerance for opposition. I was trying to keep him out of trouble when he flipped his shit. As he may have mentioned to you, his dad is not the most understanding of people."

"Yes, we have discussed that topic at some length with Mister Ingensønn. However, that was really--"

"And he did end up throwing a knife at him. So... Rapid tranquilization of someone having a breakdown before they can injure themselves or another isn't protocol in a situation like that?" Tony interrupted. "I believe the rapid sedation of someone going into full blow hysteria is an accepted form of treatment, yes?"

"Granted. Which a qualified medical practitioner might employ, however, I am not aware that in additions to your other qualifications, that you are a licensed practitioner, Mister Stark."

It was official. The Bobbsey Twins did not like him. "You know, I'm not. But did it ever occur to you to consider who gave me the damn drugs?" Tony retorted, admittedly getting a bit huffy. "Oh wait. That would be his personal physician. The woman who has been treating him for oh.... a thousand fucking years? And who, I don't know, is well aware of not only the players but also the political climate the guy has to deal with?"

"Well, yes," Doctor Schafer sighed. Pausing he looked at Tony and for the first time, allowed irritation to seep into his expression. "You do have an answer for everything, don't you, Mister Stark."

Sanctimonious twits, Tony muttered to himself. Before deciding to pull out his Stark, it might not help, but it *was* his go-to mode in times of conflict. So crinkling up his nose, Tony smiled with acid good cheer. "You should know... Not only am I a genius but I'm also quite the smooth talker."

"Well yes, there is that." Schafer acknowledged, tapping on something on his note pad and tipping it towards Rozmon who nodded in agreement. Turning back towards Tony, he continued. "We would not have advised two so such similarly damaged people to just plunge into a committed relationship without first addressing their various issues, let alone enter into one that can't be dissolved without outside permission. However, done is done." He tried to pass several sheets of paper over to Tony, who refused to take them.

"Just set them down okay. I don't like being handed stuff." And no, Tony did not like the look that

bastard gave him over that. Smug git.

“We have also given a copy of this list to Mister Ingensønn, it outlines several exercises that we recommend you both work on this weekend, please look it over and let us know tomorrow if you have any questions. Of course, neither of you should expect anything like immediate results. This situation has been a long time building, much longer than those we normally deal with...” He shrugged, “Longer than anyone has dealt with really. So it will take time, especially since future treatments are going to be spaced out over every other month.”

Oh joy, Tony thought. *Homework*. Not only did he have to deal with these two bastards, all the crap hitting fan alliance wise, and, of course, a pissed as a wet cat godling... Now they were giving him homework?

“Yeah. I got that. Look, could you guys make his attempted suicide a priority?”

“Of course. We have already begun to discuss that, as well as other willful self-endangerments he has alluded to.”

“Okay...” Tony made a mental note to ask Jarvis about those. “Good. Wonderful. Suicide thingy, that’s your number one priority.”

“Indeed. Well then, during your next session, we’ll discuss your own suicidal tendencies.” Doctor Rozmon said with a knife like smile.

OoooO

“Buddy, they’re killing me.” Tony groaned as Bruce walked in the door juggling several bags of fast food, the delivery of which he’d intercepted on his way up to the apartment.

“Well, Tony, you should have known that allying with alien Prince with mental issues was not going to be easy, especially not with you guys being on such a tight schedule before he has to return home.” Smirking, he spread the bags out on the coffee table in front of Tony. Unable to resist, apparently, he looked over the tops of his glasses, his eyes gleaming with amusement, “Now, don’t you wish you would have gotten your own problems dealt with years ago? Then you would only have to attend the occasional group session.”

Glaring up at the only slightly rumpled doctor, Tony mock growled, “Don’t you start this shit too. It’s bad enough I have to listen to Pepper’s *‘I told you so-ing’*.”

Minion rolled over and unloaded most of the drinks, napkins and silverware from a tray he was carrying. “Good afternoon, Doctor Banner,” he chirped, his screen image giving him a toothy smile. Tony pulled several items out of the various bags and placed them on the robot’s tray and waved him off.

“So. Loki not joining us for lunch?” Bruce asked, as Minion rolled back up the ramp carrying the tray of food towards the guest room.

“Mister Ingensønn is taking a quick shower to warm up and then I believe he intends to lie down for an hour before the joint session this afternoon.” Jarvis piped in.

“Yeah, that,” Tony said absently, opening a container of pork dumplings.

“Ingensønn?” Bruce asked.

OoooO

Going to the afternoon session was yet another whupping, not only when those bastard doctors touched upon Tony's personal failings, but also from the fall out of having his Tower's security arrangements outed.

"Perhaps, Mister Ingensønn, we should discuss that privately at our next session before we bring it up in group." Doctor Shafer suggested when Loki went off on a rant about how magic users were regarded on Asgard.

Loki chuckled darkly, casting a sidelong glance at Tony before he smirked at the doctor. "Like there is any privacy in Stark Tower with Jarvis listening and recording all that happens."

Both doctor looked startled as Tony groaned inwardly.

"What?" Loki laughed, a sharp bitter bark, "You didn't think that you would actually be able to offer patient healer privacy, did you? Please. I know for a fact even the bathrooms have cameras and listening devices.

Both Doctors turned accusing eyes on Tony. "We understand that security is a concern, Mister Stark, but..."

This necessitated an introduction to Jarvis and an immediate call to Pepper for her to assure the doctors that she could, as the head of Stark International, issue an absolute privacy override on their sessions and assured them that only the public areas of the guest floor were being monitored. Neither Pepper nor Tony mentioning of course, that Tony was the source of her assurances and override privileges. Not that Tony would dare countermand her orders or anything. At least not without a really, really good reason.

Tony was already starting to get a headache by the time the question had rolled around to what they believed constituted a healthy relationship.

"Relationship?" Loki asked archly, not meeting Tony's eye but rather gazing questioningly at the doctors. "Is that what it's called when you purchase a companion?"

"Oh for the love of... I did not purchase you, I proposed an alliance."

"Ah. Of course." Loki cocked his head to one side. A bight brittle grin spread across his face. "The house of Stark, allied to a false Prince of Asgard. You should be so proud..."

Groaning, Tony buried his face in that horrible plush blue pillow.

OoooO

The fourth day was pretty much the same as the third. Tony ended up with a headache and bitching to Bruce. Loki, apparently exhausted, was showering or sleeping every moment he wasn't with Bruce or the shrinks. That weekend, both doctors had commitments that even the fees they were receiving couldn't make them reschedule. Rozmon had a wedding to go to or something stupid like that. So he and Schafer had left a list of suggestions and exercises to be done before they returned on Monday.

"So." Tony said to the tea sipping god after entering the kitchen for a late lunch on Saturday. He was still groggy, not having fallen asleep until almost dawn. Ingensønn?" Tony asked, peeking into the refrigerator to see if anything caught his fancy.

"Odin is not my father; I will not answer to that name any longer." Loki said otherwise ignoring him and picking up his tea for another sip.

Well, at least he was being talked to. Tony told himself. He decided to just toast a few bagels and slather them with butter and apple jelly, rather than call out for something. Fridge skippings or takeout being his only in tower option since the Stark International Executive dining room was closed on the weekends. He popped two bagels in the toaster and reflected that if Loki wanted to call himself *'No one's son'*, according to Jarvis' translation, Tony didn't much care. Now, what Odin, Thor and Asgard would think. Well, that might be a different story.

"So we need to change your paper work?" Tony asked, tapping a knife on the counter while his breakfast toasted.

Shaking his head, Loki said, "It's not necessary, I soon have to take your house name anyhow. Just for right now... I don't want to be called Odin's son."

Taking his name? Well that was news to Tony, but he decided to let it go for now.

"Well then Mister Ingensønn, we've been cooped up here all week, after breakfast you want to go take a walk or something?"

OoooO

Apparently, the upside of getting out of the tower for some fresh air, or at least New York's air, for a couple of hours outweighed the downside of doing it while in Tony's company... But before Tony could feel too smug about it, Loki pointed out that they needed to tick a few things off their 'to do' list before Monday, and talking a walk together would satisfy at least one of them.

So they went to the park and strolled around for a few hours, not really saying anything, deciding to walk back to the tower as dusk set in. Even though by then, with the sun going down, Tony was starting to freaking freeze and would have rather taken a cab. However, Loki wanted to stretch his legs just a bit more, so Tony just went along with it in the interest of World Peace and all that crap.

They had barely made it out of the park and Tony was not looking forward to another thirty minutes of walking in the cold wind that was now blowing. So he directed their steps along 7th Ave, and right before they got to 56th Street, he stopped.

"Hey Lo, you want to go get a drink? The Carnegie Club is just half a block from here," The engineer asked, bouncing to keep warm. He knew that by the time they had a drink or two and maybe some dinner, it would be late enough to make calling a company car or a cab more practical. "You like the Carnegie Club." Allowing the god's searching gaze to wash over him without comment, Tony just raised his brows inquiringly.

"That depends." Loki said, studying him closely in the rapidly fading light. "Are we picking up women too?"

"Ah." A blush blossomed across Tony's chest rising up to his cheeks. As much as that sounded like the answers to several problems, including his having to whack off in the shower a few times this week, that was most likely not a good idea. "You know... While that might be fun... I'm afraid those bastards would give us more homework if we did." This wasn't to say it might not be something they could do once they got a clean bill of mental health. If Loki wanted to hook up with some girls that was, but now, probably not a good idea.

OoooO

Heading up to Bookmarks, which was on the fourteenth floor, so to speak, they were immediately seated by a window overlooking the city. It was too early for the evening crowd and the afternoon crowd had pretty much all left. But even when it was busy, Bookmarks was one of the quietest bars Tony patronized. It had always been a favorite of Loki's for just that reason. He liked that you could actually hold a conversation without anyone having to straining to hear. Tony liked that they were fast. He wasn't even done peeling off his coat and scarf when the ever efficient staff delivered their drink order.

"Look," Tony said, taking a sip of his. "I asked your mom, and she said no, but I've been meaning to ask you, because maybe mom doesn't know as much as she thinks she does. Was there maybe someone else you had your eye on that you never mentioned to me?" A puzzled look flitted briefly across Loki's face, before comprehension apparently set in.

"Not at the time, Stark." Loki replied, settling down at the table, his face so blank he should have been playing poker at one of the big money tables.

"Okay then. So you didn't have anyone you were pinning away for and you have always known you would have to make a political alliance. So your fucking problem with this deal is exactly what? Unlike the other contenders for your fair hand, at least you like me."

"I did." Loki said, inclining his head so regally, so much like Frigga on the steps of the throne; Tony had to take a drink of his whiskey to hide his smile.

"Okay, that one I'll give you, but you know you have fucked up majorly in the past too, you might want to cut me some slack."

Asgardian princes must have had classes in the finer nuances of eye rolling because Loki's clearly said that Tony was a thoughtless pig and possibly not worth the breath to argue with.

"Look, if I'd had the luxury—" Tony began setting down his glass and looking earnestly at the god.

"Luxury?" Loki was clearly not impressed with Tony's choice of words.

"Yeah, Luxury," The engineer retorted. "Exactly which airlines service Asgard again? Refresh my memory here."

Loki looked away a moment, before dropping his eyes to his own drink, a vile mixed thing called the '*Shakespeare*'.

"Exactly," Tony pressed. "That would be none. As in, there was no way for my ass to get from Earthgard to Asgard without going through your mother, who wanted a damned good reason to bring the first mortal into Asgard in a couple of centuries."

Huffing, Loki lifted his glass and drained it.

"Yeah, tell me about it. Anyhow, if I had not had to jump through so many hoops that the whole agreement was a fucking done deal by the time I could even see you... Would you have accepted?"

Tony watched the god carefully. After a moment of internal struggle on Loki's part, he was answered.

"Probably," Loki admitted begrudgingly.

"Your ass, you know you would have accepted. I am quite the catch, and you know it. Look, for

what it's worth, I *am* sorry."

Loki stiffened and his narrowed eyes gleamed as he glared at Tony for several long moments. "Stark, I want you to drop your glass on the floor please."

"What? The floor is tile, it will break. Why?" Confused Tony looked at the floor, trying to see what there might be about it, that Loki wanted him to drop his glass.

"Just drop the damn glass, will you?" The god demanded.

Not quite understanding why, Tony shrugged, holding his arm out so the broken glass would be as far away from him as possible. "You sure you want me to do this?" he inquired.

Loki snapped, "For the love of Yggdrasill, just open your blasted hand, Stark!"

So Tony did. As expected, the glass hit the tile floor and shattered in a dozen pieces. The wickedly sharp shards glittered against the polished dark grey floor. "Was there a reason for this? Or do you just have a grudge against my vastly overpriced drink?"

"It's broken, Stark."

Looking at the god like he was insane, which he really, really was, Tony was very much at a loss. "Uh. I see that, yeah. Glass hitting a hard surface, that's generally what happens, Sport."

"Apologize to it," Loki told him calmly, holding a hand up to stop the waitress hurrying their way with a bar towel.

"Apologize?" Dropping his head, Tony looked down at the glass wondering where the fuck this lesson on the effects of gravity as it pertained to barware was going exactly.

"Stark?"

"Humm?" Tony murmured absently still trying to suss out why exactly he was supposed to make nice with broken glassware.

"Apologize for breaking it." Loki commanded an uptick in his voice apparently due to him tiring of waiting for Tony to do as he was asked while the god angrily waved the hovering waitress back to the bar. Being as the place was virtually empty and Loki was in the company of '*The Tony Stark*', she eventually backed away.

Heaving a large dramatic sigh and rolling his eyes, Tony looked up at Loki from under wisps of bangs that had fallen over his forehead. "Fine." He huffed, before looking back down at the mess on the floor and said, "I'm sorry."

Loki's hands slammed down hard on the table, causing his own empty glass to jump. "If you're going to apologize for something, at least have the grace and courtesy to acknowledge what you are apologizing for." The god spat, his glare hot enough to cause spontaneous combustion.

Okay.... Obviously a trigger issues here, Tony frowned down at the spilled liquor and broken glass, while watching Loki with his peripheral vision.

"Do it with sincerity or not at all," Loki snapped.

It had been a weird week, so Tony decided to just roll with it. "I'm very sorry I dropped and broke you, that was wrong of me and I regret doing it." *Mostly because I am not sure why I'm having to*

do this, but let's not go there right now, he thought.

Antsy after several long moments of silently watching the broken glass, Tony rolled his head to one side. "And?"

"Now we are waiting." The god said, joining Tony in observing the mess on the floor. Loki watched in deep silent contemplation, Tony jittering around, tapping his fingers on the table a bit. Just when he was about to lose his freaking mind, Loki spoke.

"How long do you suppose it will take?" The god asked.

"How long will what take?" Tony asked puzzled, looking questioningly first at the long lean god across from him, then down at the mess beside them, and then back to Loki.

"How long do you think it will take for the glass to become whole again, now that you have apologized with heartfelt sincerity?" Loki asked, flicking a bland glance over to Tony before likewise again focusing his attention on the glass shards littering the floor.

"What the--" Tony felt the color drain from his face. He hated epiphanies. Especially silent ones, he hated them more than he hated Justin Hammer.

"Surely it will not be long," Loki gave him a sidelong glance, "now that you have apologized, everything should return to how it was, yes?"

Looking sadly down at the puddle of whiskey and glass shards beside him, Tony sighed. "Damn it all to hell Lo, you wield object lessons like a baseball bat, ya know that, right?"

"I know I do, Stark." Loki said, looking at him sadly. "But do you understand that merely apologizing doesn't automatically make things better?"

"Yeah." Tony breathed, the word barely audible.

"Congratulations Stark, that makes you more intelligent than anyone else in my supposed family."

Stomach turning, Tony looked over at Loki. "I..." He paused.

"You know Lo, all of a sudden, I don't feel so good. Do you mind if we skip eating and go home now?"

"Of course not," Loki said, taking pity on him. "Have them call us cab, Tony."

Chapter End Notes

Ingensønn by hicstans with her permission to use

*Genus Tragice iniquum spurius' - Race Tragically flawed champion

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* - mentions of SUICIDE, oh and Loki being really, kinda head fucking mean at least according to my beta. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you will have issues with any of these

items.*****

An agreement of sorts

Chapter Summary

Bruce has advice and agreements are reached. Whooo hooo.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the skippy quick, no honestly incredibly FAST Stella! Girl is like lighting!

I am so sorry this is a day late, and frankly about 2k shorter than I had hoped it would be. I have the usual excuses, Christmas, Over night company, thirteen hour road trips, holiday laziness, ect.... Please, please forgive me.

On a happier note.... Queens Grace hit the thousand kudo mark today! Boo-Yah! Thanks to all the lovely readers who took the time to let me know they enjoyed it. And of course more thanks to those who actually left comments! You all ROCK!

I have no idea why so many spaces are missing between words, it is AO3's fault I assure you. I will try to fix them... again.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 16–An agreement of sorts

“Fuck if I know, Jarvis,” Tony said as he finished winding some gauze around the Teflon pad he’d just applied. While by no means the worse burn he’d ever had, it still hurt quite a bit. “All I know is that Rozmon said something about Loki being very knowledgeable about the pharmaceutical industry. Which is pretty weird if you think about it. So poke around, see what you can find from sources that won’t get us into trouble with Pepper. Will you?” That last bit came out a bit muffled because Tony was holding a roll of surgical tape in one hand, trying to rip a piece off with his teeth, while not letting go of the gauze he’d just wrapped around his injured forearm.

“Very well sir. Speaking of Ms. Potts, she is in the elevator and will be up to see you shortly.”

“Fine, Jay.” Tony hastily used the tape to secure the end of the gauze in place. “Slow her down a bit, so I can get all this stuff out of sight before she gets here,” Tony said, sweeping medical supplies off his work bench and into the first aid box.

Dummy had just trundled away with the box when Pepper knocked on the door frame. She was, as usual, smartly dressed in her well-tailored red suit which perfectly showed off her great legs.

“Hey, Pep! What brings you here?” Only slightly concerned, Tony still did a quick mental check

and concluded with an inner sigh of relief that he was good and nothing had been left undone to get him bitched at. "I signed everything you left for me and sent it back downstairs already."

"I know, Tony," Pepper said, trailing a finger lightly across the work bench he was using. Frowning slightly at the small forging kiln beside it, she flicked a knowing look at Tony, which irritated him to no end. He didn't always burn himself. "It's been a few days since I last saw you and I wanted to check and see how you and Loki are doing."

Tony brushed a hand down his other arm, making sure it covered his bandage. "Vaslin canceled his afternoon session and sent him down for a nap after examining him at lunch time. He was kinda wiped out. Tony stepped over the small couch, drawing Pepper away from the kiln, he threw himself down with a groan. "Which got my session moved up."

As Pepper laughed, Tony picked up a small pillow and face planted himself. "Feelings, Pep," He mumbled. "They make me talk about feelings. You know I hate that stuff, that's why I hired you."

Pushing Tony's feet off the couch, Pepper sat down beside him, patting his back. "Oh come on, Tony. It's not that bad."

"It *is*. You have no idea how bad it is," Tony complained. "And last weekend? We had to do *sensitivity and trust exercises*, Pep. I've been fucking roped into my own personal marriage encounter workshop. And we aren't even fucking married!"

Laughing like the heartless bitch that she was, Pepper patted his back again. "It won't kill you, Tony."

"You don't know that," He mock whined.

"I *do* know that. It will be fine. You'll see."

OooooO

Not that Bruce was any more sympathetic towards Tony's plight than Pepper had been when he stopped in that evening to check on them. All he wanted to do was lecture Tony on the proper care and feeding of upset Norse gods.

"Look, Tony, even though the guy is used to acting like nothing bothers him, it obviously does. And with his body not being at full strength, I'm amazed he even gets out of bed right now. Even one of the issues you told me would be enough for me to reasonably expect the guy to try to sleep for a week, but add them all together? We're taking a run up to mental Armageddon."

"Ragnarök." Tony said, fishing under the bar for something he could tolerate and wouldn't get Bruce too wound up. After a few moments, he sighed and just snagged two beers out of the small fridge.

"Ragnarök?" Bruce asked, settling in on the other side of the bar and taking the offered beer, not so much because he wanted it, but more so Tony didn't have two. Bruce's brows furled a moment in concentration before he answered his own question. "Oh yeah, the Norse Armageddon. Yeah. Anyhow, he is being highly functional for someone who just had that kind of a load dropped on them. So you might want to cut him some slack and rein back your normal charming personality."

Shaking his head ruefully, Tony rolled his eyes and peered at the label of whatever fucking craft beer Jarvis had ordered for him this time. He never seemed to have the same damn brands twice in

a row.

"And in answer to your question from the other day?" Bruce continued, oblivious to Tony's inner monologue. "It's going to take a while. You need to be patient."

Yeah. Like that wasn't news he wasn't aware of, Tony thought sourly, finishing off the beer and deciding that if Bruce was going to remind him of crap like that, then fuck Bruce, he needed something stronger. Tossing his empty beer bottle in the trash, Tony looked under the bar and pondered.

Glengoyne 40 Year Old? He shrugged and set the bottle on the bar. "Yeah, that's me exactly, Brucie. Patient and understanding." Holding up a second glass, he looked inquiringly at Bruce, putting it back when he received a small head shake. Pouring his drink, he glanced up to see Bruce regarding him with some amusement. "I am so fucked."

"Actually, no, you're not." Bruce replied with a chuckle. "And barring any miracles, you won't be anytime soon. Which, I think, we can both admit is going to be a bit of a trial for you."

"Ya think?" Tony asked sardonically, taking a large gulp of his drink before carrying it and the bottle with him as he came out from behind the bar.

"Actually, I think you'll be fine, Tony. You are patient and understanding; you just don't give yourself enough credit." Pushing away from the bar, Bruce bent down to pick up his leather satchel; standing, he used his index finger to push his glasses back into place. "Well, I've got to get back before Janis decides to have dinner without me."

Halfway to the entry hall, the doctor turned, "Oh and Tony?"

Ignoring Tony's *'I can't take one more piece of bad news right now'* look, he continued with a small smile. "I'm consulting with your family doctor, and I am okay with that, I mean, I know Loki's currently physical baselines better than anyone on the planet, but I just want to remind you—"

"I'm not that kind of doctor," Tony chorused with him. "Yeah. I know, but you are still the best."

"Just so you understand." Bruce said, a tiny grin tugging at the corners of his mouth.

Trailing him out to the elevator, Tony waved goodbye to him with the whiskey bottle hand as the elevator slid closed.

OoooO

Tony didn't flinch when Loki came in to the kitchen the next morning. He would have liked the reason to be that he was too hung over to care... But with four doctors, one of them being Bruce, roaming the tower at any given moment during the day, he had resisted the impulse to drink himself blind last night and, frankly, fell asleep the minute he got a nice mellow buzz going. No, the reason that Tony didn't flinch was that he was honestly just too wrung out from the emotional pummeling he was getting every other day, either from the docs, Loki or the voice of his own self-consciousness. He just didn't have a flinch left in him.

When Loki sat down across the table from him, also exhausted looking but still well groomed in dress slacks, a button down shirt and a vest, Tony couldn't help but feel extra grubby. Mostly because he was still in yesterday's clothes, as he hadn't bother to getting undressed last night and

was too tired to change this morning. And face it, even fresh from the closet, his jeans and old band shirts were decidedly less stylish than anything the fashion plate across from him would wear. Hell, even in his Asgard servant's wardrobe, Loki managed to look better dressed than any casual attire Tony might wear, and even if he wasn't tired, he'd be fucked if he was wearing Armani to breakfast.

He was on his second cup of coffee when Loki broke the silence. "I am sorry that I have reacted so poorly to recent events."

After blinking a few times, Tony stared at his coffee cup extra wide eyed.

"It's not like I didn't know you could be tackless and sometimes aggravatingly impulsive even when your goal is admirable." Loki said in a low voice. Surprised, Tony peeped up through his bangs to find Loki staring at his bagel as if all the wisdom in the world was inscribed in the cream cheese. "And it's not like I don't exhibit the same behavior on occasions. Norns knows I can be a selfish thoughtless bacraut myself sometimes."

Tony smacked his hand down hard, causing Loki to jump, and then resting his elbow on the table as he pointed a finger at the startled godling, "Who are you and what have you done with my Trickster. You know, gorgeous smart guy, looks a lot like you but would never actually admit to a fault, not that he has many that is," Tony hurriedly backpedaled.

Giving him a weary lopsided grin, Loki continued. "Since it's mostly Odin and Frigga I'm mad at, why should I continue to take it out on you?"

Leaning back, Tony scowled suspiciously, studying Loki with narrowed eyes. They watched each other for a moment and then Tony said, "So... Is this you telling me this? Or is this one of the docs?"

The god huffed, plainly exasperated, "Do I look like I have someone hand up my arse moving my mouth, Stark?" His sour expression fading as he watched the emotions flickering across Tony face as he considered *that* mental image.

"Well," Tony said after several long minutes. "Maybe you were mad at me because I was a stupid and thoughtless jerk whose actions hurt you?"

After taking a moment to rub his eyes tiredly, Loki replied, "Not a crime, Stark. And also not something I haven't been myself in years gone by. At best I should just get my revenge and either forgive you or move on."

Okay... This could totally work out, Tony thought, determined to ignore the revenge thing in the hopes that it would go away if he did so. "Well, since neither one of us can move on," He drawled happily, "I guess you'll have to forgive me."

"So I have concluded. Once I've gotten my revenge of course."

"What?" Tony sat up extra straight. "No. You don't need to do that. I'm good with just moving on. Honest."

Loki lightly traced a finger from just below Tony's ear to just under his chin, he leaned in so close their noses almost touched, his tired eyes lit up for a moment. "Oh Stark," He purred, "Were would the fun be for me in that?" Tapping the finger twice under Tony's chin, he used it to lift Tony's head, leaning in to give him a soft kiss on this forehead. "You do want me to enjoy myself, don't you, Tony?"

“Well... yeah... Hey! You only call me Tony when you’re setting me up for the fall!”

Crinkling his nose in a manner far too adorable for a grown man, Loki winked at him and gently patted his cheek before slipping away from the table. “You really are a genius, aren’t you?” he called over his shoulder airily as he sauntered backtowards his own room.

OoooO

“Sir has just finished taking a shower, but he will be out shortly, Doctor Banner.” Jarvis said as Bruce entered the foyer. He had only just hung up his coat and gone down the ramp to the living room when a very damp looking Tony exited the hallway that led to the master bedroom.

“Hey ya Bruce,” Tony called out, giving his hair a few more rubs, and then tossing the wet towel to the waiting scutter ‘bot. “Where’s Vaslin?” He asked, walking down to greet his friend.

“Vaslin had an emergency, he won’t be here today, which is fine really, we just need some more samples to establish a longer baseline for Loki’s medication. I want as much information on hand as we can get to medically justify his extended stay.”

Clapping Bruce first on the back, Tony then put his arm around his friend’s shoulder and steered him over towards the seating area. “I totally understand. Asgardians can be a scary bunch. Eir especially.”

“Uh huh,” Bruce said absently, allowing himself to be towed.

“What?” Tony demanded, finally noticing the puzzled look Bruce was giving him.

“Tony, you’re freezing, I thought you just...”

Tony raised his brows in mock inquiry.

“Oh...”

Enlightened, Bruce looked away a moment, before allowing his eyes to slide back towards his chilly friend.

“Yeah... *Oh*.” Tony said ruefully, making a face, but resisted with great effort, the urge to stick his tongue out at Bruce.

Fighting back a smile and putting his hands in the pockets of his brown Dockers, Bruce asked, “So... We understand he’s getting a car just to let you talk to him.”

“Not 'talk', 'explain', Bruce. I get to explain my past screw up as much as I want, as many times as I want, with no screaming or recriminations on his part.” Bruce’s involuntary bark of laughter was turned into a very unconvincing cough. “I’m glad to see that my pain amuses you, buddy.” Tony said with an exaggerated grimace for the doctor’s benefit.

“Do I even want to ask what it cost you to get him to see the psychiatrists?”

“You’ll have to ask me later, I don’t know.” Tony mimicked the doctor by shoving his own hands in to the front pockets of his jeans. “He wants a shopping spree.” Making another face, Tony amended his last statement. “Or rather, he wants to buy something to be determined later with no questions asked.” Noting the mild alarm on the doctor’s face, he hurriedly added, “I did stipulate

that it couldn't be an army, or country, or anything like that."

"Oh. Well... I'm glad to hear that you didn't leave it totally open ended." Huffing in amusement for a moment at Tony's plight, Bruce's face took on a more pensive expression as they both sat down. Tony sprawled out in his favorite spot of the couch, and Bruce in the nearby chair.

"Isn't this all... Surprisingly materialistic?" The doctor asked hesitantly. "Given the situation, I mean. I would have thought he'd have pushed for..."

"For what, Bruce?" Tony interrupted. "Some attitude changes on my part?" When his friend slowly nodded, Tony explained. "Yeah, I'd thought so, too. As I understand it, he feels promises to change are cheap and easily broken so he'd rather get something tangible out of the deal."

"Oh."

"Yeah. For every time you transgress. It's like he is running the world's most expensive swear jar." He tried not to, but Tony couldn't help but join in as Bruce started chuckling.

It was a pretty funny image, Tony had to admitted as his mind visualized a gigantic glass jar with 'Loki Rulez' written in green runic looking script on the front and stuffed full with antique cars, furs, jewels and designer clothes.

OoooO

It would have to be Bruce that caught them a few hours later as he came out of the library, where he'd been working. Looking at his tablet, he must not have noticed them until he was almost in the living room. God knows Tony hadn't noticed him approaching. Nothing quieter than a Marching Band would have been guaranteed to catch his attention, what with how distracted he was.

"...I, ...I can see you're busy, I'll come back later," Stammered a flustered Bruce, whose pink tinted ears turned red when with one last nibble on Tony's neck, Loki sensuously, with lots of stroking and squeezing, unwrapped himself from Tony, giving the doctor him one of his fucking sex on a stick looks and purring, "It's alright, Doctor Banner, Tony and I were just working on one of our exercises."

"Kama sutra?" Bruce asked without apparently thinking, judged by the way his color rose even higher the minute those words were out of his mouth. Tony lifted his head to look at Bruce and huffed in black amusement as Bruce's various sunset hues deepened.

Loki stilled. "It's a joke, I'll explain later," Tony murmured, closing his eyes and turning his flushed face back to again tuck it against his god's neck.

"Ah." Loki ran both hands down Tony's back, his long clever fingers dancing and kneading along the base of Tony's spine. "Actually, Doctor, we were instructed to find activities that we could do together and that we would both enjoy."

Tony couldn't see Loki's face, but he could hear the smug, self-satisfied grin in his voice. "You're enjoying *this* a lot, aren't you?" He muttered against Loki's neck, not wanted to let go just yet, and not just because he needed to calm himself down before facing Bruce.

"Indeed, I am, Tony," The Trickster cooed, planting a small kiss against the engineer's damp hair

line. “Shall I stop?” *Oh god please no*, was what Tony wanted to say, praying that ‘*this*’ time might be ‘*the*’ time. However, there was far too much smirk in his god’s voice rather than the needy whining he knew he needed to hear for even a ‘*Happy Ending*’ to be in his immediate future.

“As much as I’d like to continue,” Tony said regretfully, “We do have company. So yeah. We need to quit.”

“As you wish, Tony.” Loki ignored Tony’s little involuntary huffs of dissatisfaction as the god unwound from him. “I’ll leave you two alone, I’m sure you will have much to discuss,” Loki told them in that hot honey tone of his as he sashayed up the ramp.

Grimacing painfully, Tony waved his hand, obviously asking Bruce to give him a minute and leaned over against the back of couch.

“Jarvis, please have Minion bring me some tea, and perhaps a couple of those cranberry biscotti if there are any left,” Loki’s voice wafted down the hall to them, while Tony took a few shuddering breaths.

“Looks painful.” Bruce observed.

This, as far as Tony was concerned, should have won Banner the ‘Most Obviously Redundant Statement of the Year’ award. “Oh Bruce, you have no idea.” Tony retorted, trying to discreetly rearrange himself, wishing like hell that he’d worn a shirt that could have been untucked or something. “Monday he started pulling this shit several times a day.”

“Really? So why don’t you just tell him to stop?” Bruce asked in mild curiosity as Tony experimentally attempted to stand up straight.

“Because as long as he thinks it’s bothering me, which it is, he won’t stop. It makes him feel like he’s paying me back for being a jerk in a way that doesn’t involve me being tossed around the room, thank god. But mostly because it’s starting to wind him up as much as it does me and I’m hoping it won’t be too long before he can’t bring himself to stop. Hopefully that will happen before my balls explode.”

“Ah.” Bruce bit his bottom lip watching while Tony clutched the couch for support and slowly eased around the end of it. He picking up the small accent pillow for strategic cover and gently lowered himself into an almost reclining position, setting the pillow on his lap. Bruce managed not to laugh as Tony started breathing in a way very reminiscent of a woman practicing her Lamaze technique.

“Okay then. I think I’d better be heading home. I’m glad everything is working out okay for you.” To which Tony snorted in response.

“Oh fine. Cock Block me and then just leave. I’d throw this damn pillow at you if I didn’t kinda need it right now,” Tony called in frustrated amusement as a still slightly pink Bruce beat a hasty retreat for the elevator.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They

all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS I- None that I can think of.

Shopping trip

Chapter Summary

What light on yonder terrace breaks? Oh hell, it's the BiFrost.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Stella who totally cracks me up with her inserted 'reader' comments. :)

If you are still reading this and you haven't Kudo'd... Please think about doing so. Anthony of Asgard is lagging way behind Queens Grace. :(

I have no idea why the line spacing is so large, AO3 is having issues I imagine. (I've removed them and then even stripped all the word formatting code out and re-pasted in plain text and it's still a mess. I give up.)

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Anthony of Asgard Chapter 17 – Shopping trip

Loki took to ambushing Tony numerous times during the day, although he did notice that sometimes after the god came out of a session with the shrinks, it was sometimes more about holding Tony for several minutes and taking comfort from him than it was stroking Tony into a frenzy and then waltzing off to leaving him in pain. Those times were the only reason Tony didn't have Jarvis start warning him when Loki was heading his way.

Well, that and the fact that eventually Loki might get so carried away he didn't stop. That reason too.

But it wasn't all kitten kisses and hard-ons. All of them knew they were fast approaching the end of Odin's patience. So the push, especially by the shrinks, to get Loki into a better place mentally

before he had to leave, meant that some days were rougher than others. It took its toll on all of them.

“Sir, Mister Ingensønn appears to be waking up.” Jarvis said, interrupting Tony as he reviewed specification change recommendations for the site plans of the Shinjuku Park Tower Arc Reactor installation in Tokyo.

“Thanks Jay.” Tony saved his file and hurried to Loki’s room, knocking lightly before gently pushing the door open. And hey, what do ya know, there was a six foot plus of smoking hot Norse god finally waking up.

“How you feeling, Sport?” Tony asked. Leaning against the door frame, he reflected how weird it was that they had started slipping in and out of past behaviors. Last night for example, while collapsed on the couch together after a totally grueling day had ended up feeling like one of their Buddy Clubbing Days. Admittedly, one of the hung over and hurting like a bitch days, but still...

“Like I’ve been gored by a Bilgesnipe.” Came a hoarse muffled reply from somewhere underneath a rumpled comforter. The elegant chocolate swirls on cream comforter looked a bit odd, wrapped around Loki like some kind of kid’s wubby.

“That good, huh? Lucky you, Vaslin is waiting to get some more blood samples and do an examination before you go see Rozmon and Schafer.”

Loki groaned and pulled the comforter tighter around him. “Do we have to do that this morning?” The pathos in his god’s voice drew Tony into the room, to perch on the edge of the bed.

“Actually it’s almost noon, and yes you have to do this. Jarvis and I both tried to wake you up earlier, but you just flat refused to move, so I took your session time. This means, drum roll please, I’ve done my solo session for the day! Now you need to get your samples drawn and then go talk to the Crane brothers.”

While I take a nap, Tony thought, making a mental note to erase all traces of illicit-napping from his person when he woke up.

Normally his sessions were not as draining for him as they were for Loki, but today had more of a downer than usual and Tony was beat. He honestly didn’t know how the fuck his god put up with them dredging up centuries more of the crap than Tony had to deal with. No wonder the guy

refused to get out of bed this morning. Tony was just amazed that it had taken this long for Loki to shut down on them.

“I really don’t want to.”

“I know, buddy, I know.” He said soothingly, pat-patting the blanket covered shoulder. Casting his mind around for some enticement, he didn’t think pistachio pudding was going to work, Tony recalled a conversation he’d had with Bruce earlier in the day. “Hey, Bruce thinks we need another break, so what do you think about me telling the Four Horsemen to piss off and leave us alone this weekend?”

“No sessions?”

“Yeah, we could sleep in, maybe see a show, take a drive. I could take you out in your car; maybe start teaching you how to burn up a clutch? Or just maybe just kick around doing nothing all day?”

The comforter pushed back and two gleaming green eyes stared at him from the shadows for a long moment. “Odin might not look upon that very kindly,” Loki said with a warning note in his voice.

“You know, I did think of that.” And he had. Old One Eye had been haunting Tony’s sleep since the beginning of the second week. “But Bruce, you know the rumpled brunette? Wears glasses? One of your doctors? The cute one? Anyhow, he thinks you need it to get your stress levels down. Even with the meds, he says your counts are creeping back up.” Tony used his hands to make a few complicated passes and said in an upbeat voice, “So presto-chango, we have us a medical opinion that needs to be listened to.”

“Praise the Norms, Stark, that’s a reasonable excuse,” Loki said, relief flowing across his face.

“Yes, please.”

Reaching over with a wide grin on his face, Tony ruffled Loki’s already messy hair, ignored the cat-like noise of displeasure Loki made, and stood up. Amazingly, instead of continuing to fuss at him, Loki merely gave him a tired grin.

“All righty then, we’ll take the weekend off. So, come on. You need to get up, get showered and start your day, late as it is.” Tony’s voice, while firm, was not unkind as he gently tugged at the comforter, encouraging the trickster to get his day started.

Later that afternoon, in response to a heads up from Jarvis that Loki had stormed out of his session about twenty minutes early, Tony sighed and headed upstairs to find him sitting in the living room in what had become his chair, pensively looking out a window, chewing on a thumbnail.

“So...” Tony drawled, running a finger across the buttery soft leather back of the chair Loki was sitting in. “Tough session?” He asked, knowing of course that it had to have been.

“Being lost in the void couldn’t have been worse than this,” The god muttered in reply, his eyes remaining fixed on the unseen cityscape in front of him.

Tony suppressed the shudder from the jolt of dread that raced down his own spine. He still occasionally had issues with the void and he had not spent near the time there that Loki had. Pulling up a nearby ottoman, Tony folded his hands on the arm of Loki’s chair. Leaning forward, he rested his right cheek on top of them and joined the god in gazing out the window. He wasn’t sure how long they had sat there in silence, but at some point in time Loki had shifted his left hand to rest on Tony’s upper back.

“Sir, I am picking up atmospheric indications that we will be having visitors from Asgard here shortly.” Jarvis said, his voice almost apologetic as he broke the comfortable silence. He felt Loki stiffened.

“Buck up, Reindeer Games,” Tony said bracingly, moving one of his hands to pat the god’s nearby knee. “It could just be Eir coming to check up on you.”

At last, Loki looked away from the window, turning disbelieving eyes towards him. “And exactly how is that supposed to reassure me, Stark?”

“Tony,” He replied without thinking. “And you’re right, it wouldn’t. I’ve seldom met a scarier old broad.”

Huffing, but not Tony thought in disagreement, Loki started to move his hand from Tony’s back when Jarvis announced, “Sirs, it appears Mister Ingensønn’s brother Thor has arrived, and he is accompanied by several gentlemen that appear to be guards of some sort. Although I must inform you that they are dressed differently than the guards who normally accompanied Queen Frigga.”

That he was not the most sensitive guy in the world had been brutally pointed out to Tony several times in the last few weeks, but insensitive or not, he had noticed the quiver that ran through the god when Jarvis said '*Mister Ingensønn's brother.*'

"Ummm, Jarvis, we're not quite ready to go into the whole last name thing with Thor yet, so maybe just address him as Prince Loki or something? And maybe loose the word brother for the time being? Just Thor will do, we know who he is." Loki's hands unclenched a bit.

"Very good, sir."

"You want to stay here and let me see what I can do to divert him?" He asked, turning his head to catch a glimpse of the rapidly approaching figures through the glass terrace doors, before turning back to the Trickster.

"There is no diverting Thor," Loki told him in a hard sneering tone, once again looking out his window, absolutely refusing to watch his adopted brother approach.

"Yeah?" Tony patted his knee one last time and stood up. "Well, you've never seen me in action before; smooth and diplomatic doesn't even begin to describe it."

Tony was only halfway to the doors when the Thunder god barreled through them, eyes sweeping the room for one instant before they fixed eagerly on his younger brother.

"Go away, Thor." Tony demanded, holding up a hand in a '*stop right there*' motion as he attempted to keep the older god from getting any further into the room. A doomed attempt since Thor had to keep moving to avoid the wave of Loki's body guards coming up behind him.

"Look, we're having a rough day here. We have shit scheduled this afternoon that's going to make it rougher, and frankly we just don't need any crap from Asgard right now."

Behind him he heard a strangled snort.

"I am sorry to disturb you but I bring missives from mother and father." Thor told him, holding up a small satchel.

Tony rolled his eyes and made a '*Oh fuck just shoot me now*' face while Loki let out a strangled

hiss. Tony wasn't sure if that was for the letters from home or the references to the mother and father he no longer felt he had. Loki's problem with his not-parents being an ongoing source of contention between him and the shrinks. Having been informed of the political realities of the situation on Asgard the Crane Brothers were attempting to help Loki work on his coping skills since recommending that he remove Odin and Frigga from his daily life until he felt ready to come to terms with his feelings about their betrayal, was just not possible.

"So, Thor," Tony asked, following him over towards Loki's chair. "What's with the entourage?" He motioned to the guards standing just inside the terrace doors.

"I think, more that father wants to be sure someone other than yourself knows where Loki is."

"Oh really, well--" Loki started.

"Bide brother. Mother wishes it also. She feels that with the revelations you have recently had they could be helpful. She has been beside herself with worry..."

Standing so quickly it was almost like he was catapulted out of his chair; Loki stalked over and stood almost nose to nose with Thor. Every single thing about his posture screamed confrontation to the extent where Thor actually fell back half a step.

"Thor Odinson, you're not my brother, and she is not my mother." Loki growled, his low raspy voice more reminiscing of a cornered snarling dog than his normally refined tones. "Did you not listen to what Odin All Father said? I am a Jotun runtling, not an Æsir, and certainly not the son of Asgard's king, or a child of its queen, and definitely not the brother of its golden prince." Loki practically spat the words at Thor before leaning in even closer, his eyes narrowing in suspicion until they were mere slits of maliciously glittering green. "But now that I think on it, you didn't seem the least bit surprised. Exactly how long, '*Odinson*', have you known I was adopted? Was that why you never cared to notice me as we grew older, except when you wanted something from me?"

"Don't be ridiculous, Loki, you are my bother." Thor tried to place a comforting hand on Loki's neck, only to have the younger god twist out from under it with another angry hiss. Thor forged on, "You are, and you know this. You have always been and will always be my brother!" Distress at Loki repudiation of him clear in every word the Thunder God uttered. It honestly was bad enough that Tony was sure his eyes were going to roll out of his head one day from dealing with these two.

"Well, if you insist." Loki scoffed, gifted him with a sharp cruel smile. "After all, how can a Jotun foundling and prisoner argue with the shining light of Asgard." Thor started to say something but

before he could do more than open his mouth, Loki held a long finger shush-ingly to his lip. Thor frowned, and began to say something when Loki shushed him once more. “But I must say, looking back through the years, if you truly do think of yourself as my brother that makes you a pretty poor excuse for one.”

“Alrighty then.” Tony interposed himself between a crestfallen Thor and his more than slightly vicious partner. Not without a little apprehension, they were gods, after all. “Thor, you heading back right away?”

“Well, no. Not for at least a few days--”

“Anyone have orders to take this one back immediately?” He asked jerking a thumb at Loki.

“No, I am going to see Jane while I am here and Loki is to return with me once Eir has conferred with your healers...” Thor said trailing off, obviously both hurt and confused at the baleful glare Loki was trying to ignite his clothes with.

“Great. Jarvis, call Jane, let her know Point Break is here and that we’d be happy to have her stay in one of the executive suites. Arrange transportation, all that jazz.”

“Rudolf, why don’t you take your body guards downstairs and get them settled on the guest floor. Jarvis, scan ‘em and get a dresser in here to get them kitted out with some Midgardian casual wear. Enough for a few days at least. Lo, make sure the dresser doesn’t go off on some sort of artistic tangent. Oh. Or better, Jarvis, call Rebecca, she occasionally freelances for people who don’t need Charles but just want a personal shopper, see if she can help.”

“Very good, Sir. Prince Loki if you would show your people down to the guest floor.”

“Lo, let her know if you want them to blend like normal civilians or have a more cohesive part of a team look.”

“Stark!”

“Hey, no hissing at me. You sound like you’ve sprung a leak.” Slipping a hand behind Loki's neck, Tony pulled him down to whisper in his ear. “You settle your guys; let me see if I can settle this one.” He pulled back and gave Loki a look loaded with so much amusement that it caused his god

to stop and stare hard at Tony, trying to figure out what he might be planning that would put such a mischievous gleam in his eyes. “Go. Shoo.” Pushing Loki to get him started towards the elevator, Tony waved a hand at the guards indicating that they should follow. They of course looked to Thor for orders before doing so.

He was really going to have to work on that. Waving to the puzzled guards as they passed by him, Tony spun on his heel towards Thor, almost bouncing in suppressed excitement.

“You know, Thor. As much as I do not want to deal with anything from your dad, it’s a good thing you’re here. There are a couple of Loki’s doctors who would like to talk to you and get your take on certain events. Jarvis fill the Crane Boys in on what’s happening and let them know their next customer is here will you.”

“This would help them in their treatment of my brother?”

“Oh yeah,” Tony assured him with a fairly clear conscience, but not really caring one way or the other. He was just glad to have someone to throw at their place this afternoon. It was supposed to be a group session, but he doubted if the good doctors would pass up a chance to talk to Thor. And truth be told, Tony thinks that Thor could use a taste of the self-searching hell his brother has been in for the last few weeks. After all, some of his problems were caused by Thor’s clueless behavior, weren’t they?

“So, buddy. Do you think your mom might be coming down anytime soon?”

OoooO

Loki was taking the opportunity to sleep in the next morning when a slightly hang-dog looking Thor slunk in to where Tony was sitting in the kitchen. The engineer lifted his coffee cups to his lips so he could smirk without being too obvious about it. Trailing behind Thunder Pants was the astrophysicist Jane Foster who Tony had talked to numerous times over the years and... Her old assistant Darcy. Darcy something.

There was a chorus of hellos, Jane's low and musical, Darcy Something's was slightly grating, and Thor's was remarkable muted compared to the booming '*good morrows*' he normally belted out.

Lowering his head and his coffee cup, Tony looked at Darcy from under his lowered brows. “I didn’t know you were working for Jane again.” He queried in a puzzled voice, “Jarvis? Why didn’t

I know Darcy Somebody was working for Jane again?"

"It's Lewis and you didn't know because I'm not." Darcy said, plopping down at the table and dragging the so far unopened box of donuts over towards her. "Since Shield broke up, I've been clerking as a semi-permanent temp with the Coast Guard over on Staten Island," she mugged and shrugged obviously less than thrilled with either her change of status or the place she was working, Tony wasn't sure and didn't care which. "Anyhow, it's the weekend. I'm off work and Jane and Thor are in town. I decided to visit Reddy Kilowatt and Janie here." She tilted her head in Jane's direction and snagged two chocolate frosted chocolate cake donuts. Using her free hand, she closed the box and pushed it towards Thor before continuing. "Besides, even the cheap rooms in your tower are better than any hotel I could ever afford downtown."

Not sure if he was insulted about the '*cheap room*' crack or amused at her calm assurance of welcome, Tony decided to split the difference. "Please," He told her. "Make yourself at home, and don't hesitate to let me know if I can get you some coffee or anything else you might need to make you stay here in Chez Stark more comfortable," Tony said snidely, making a face at the bespectacled brunette which she returned with a grin while reaching over to grab a few paper napkins to put her donuts on.

"Cream and two sugars please," Darcy said. "For my coffee?" She prodded when Tony just sat there ignoring her.

"Stay, Tony, I'll get it," Thor rumbled, amazingly pushing the box back towards the center of the table without opening it. "And one for you also, Jane?" She nodded, frowning at the unusually subdued Thor turned to the counter.

OoooO

"So... I hear from the Electric Company that you're hooking up with his psychotic little baby bro?" Darcy said, watching as Thor, accompanied by Jane for company and moral support, went to go drink their coffee and get some air out on the terrace while waiting for Rozman and Schafe to show up. Few things affected Thor's appetite in general and his craving for sweets in particular, but apparently shrinks were now on that list.

"By the way," Darcy continued once the pair was out of earshot. "That was a pretty dick move tossing Thunder Britches in to the shrink shark tank. The boy is going to be scarred for life." Tony snorted, unable to keep the ends of his mouth from curling up into a little Cheshire Cat grin.

"Yeah, having the big blonde goof cry all over her was probably not what Janie was expecting this

weekend.” Tony merely shrugged, not really caring how the Thunder Britches felt about his surprise therapy session. In his opinion, the whole royal family of Asgard should have been seeing shrinks for the last few centuries.

“One good thing,” Darcy continued blithely, “At least this isn’t going to cut into your playboy time too bad. Not with you only seeing the guy once a month, so party on and all that.”

Glaring at Darcy was like throwing water on a duck, and a particularly clueless duck at that. So Tony decided to be a bit less subtle, and do a major eye roll instead. “Oh yeah, like that’s going to work. Thanks for trying to cheer me up, Lois, next time, just schedule me a tax audit or gum scraping, why don’t you?”

“It’s Lewis. And how hard can it be to hide a little side nookie from someone who isn’t even going to be on the planet but six days a year. You’re a hot shot playboy for crying out loud, you should be able to manage that.”

Cocking his head quizzically, Tony folded his arms and leaned his chair back on two legs. “Let’s count them off, shall we? Baby Bro is not some dizzy socialite who might hire a high priced investigative agency to dog my every step.”

“Yeah, so that’s good.”

“Yeah. No. Instead, baby bro can ‘Scry’ which is a mystical one way video call that lets him see and hear me, but doesn’t require me to pick up the phone to connect. Baby Bro’s father has two honking big assed birds that can travel between realms and report back to the father-in-law, who doesn’t like me by the way.”

“What’s not to love?” Darcy muttered under her breath, just loud enough for Tony to hear her.

Ignoring her deliberate provocation, the engineer continued, his being less than thrilled evident in his voice and cadence, “Oh, and the father-in-law has a throne that is supposedly a peeping-tom’s wet dream and, like the ‘Scrying’ thing, allows him to see whatever he wants without anyone even knowing he is looking.” Tony grimaced. “Mom-in-law is some sort of see-all-know-all seer, and that brings us to bro-in-law, who loves his baby brother, fuck knows why, and has a big assed hammer, a high voltage temper, and is best buddies with some dude who is as I mentioned ‘*All Fucking Seeing*’.”

Dropping his chair back down with a heavy thump, Tony made a face. “Now, I don’t say that last one to be overly dramatic. Apparently, extraordinary measures have to be taken if you don’t want ‘*All Fucking Seeing*’ bastard to be able to see you while you’re making the beast with two backs. So...” Tony glared at Darcy who was turning red in the face from trying not to laugh at him. “You tell me how this is going to work. Cause from where I am standing, it’s not looking too good. I’m going to be hitched to a smoking hot god, who I’m only going to see one day a month, and my chances of getting any on the side, even if I wanted to, which for the record I don’t right now, are somewhere between ‘*fat chance fucker*’ and ‘*don’t think even think about that if you want to keep your balls*’.”

Darcy was now gasping for air, apparently having a fit of some sort to keep from laughing hysterically outloud.

“Go ahead, laugh at my pain, Lois, payback is a bitch.”

“Tony?”

They both looked over towards the kitchen entry where Loki was standing with a quizzical look on his face, hopefully because he didn’t know who Lois was and not because he’d overheard Tony’s masterful summation.

OoooO

Lois, or Lewis as she kept insisting her name was, got on with Loki like a house on fire. Not that Tony minded their very rapidly coming to an understanding and quickly establishing a good relationship. He didn’t. It was what happened as a result of that instant affinity for each other that he was upset about. If he’d had the slightly inkling of all the trouble it was going to cause, Tony would have never left the two alone. Who knew a potty run on Tony’s part was going to have such far reaching effects?

But, however bitterly Thor later tried to place the blame on him, Tony was of the opinion it was Thor’s fault for bringing the psycho dingbat to his tower in the first place.

“You want me to authorize Jarvis to transfer cash to you?” Tony asked quizzically.

“Yes, did I not just say that, Stark?” Loki gave him a peeved look. “You said I could purchase whatever I wanted, yes?”

“Well yeah,” Tony could feel his face scrunching in puzzlement at he looked at the pair in front of him. “But what does that have to do with cash?”

“What I want is for my purchase to be private.” Loki explained, “Hence I need cash, correct?”

A tiny, needle sharp ice pick was slowly stabbing Tony’s right temple. “What are you buying that needs to be secret, Lo? While I know I only specified no armies or counties, I think it goes without saying that the nothing illegal stipulation was kinda implied in our deal.”

“Oh, give it a break, Tin Man, it’s not like he’s going to buy a semi-load of cocaine or anything like that.” Darcy sniped, sticking the tip of her tongue out at him and then making a face and when he stared at her for butting into the conversation.

“A semi-load... Christ,” Tony groaned, going over and getting a soft-side ice pack out of his freezer.

“Look, just give me a ball park, how much money are we talking here?” He demanded, dropping back down in the chair he’d vacated less than twenty minutes ago.

“Perhaps four hundred thousand?” Loki looked over at Darcy who shook her head no and held up a thumb indicating that he should go higher. “No more than five hundred thousand?” She nodded.

Not that he couldn’t afford to hand over that kind of money, but still, he would like to know what the hell his snookums-to-be was buying. He’d figured he was going to be hit up for a fuck-you Rolex or something like that. And just how was it that Ditz-gurl could be privy to the purchase and not him?

Holding the ice pack to his right eye and temple, Tony held up his index finger, asking the dynamic duo to wait a moment. After perhaps a minute, he lowered the ice pack and blinked a few times to clear his sight. “Lo, first off it is impossible on Earthgard, or at least this part of Earthgard, to spend that kind of money in cash without being arrested on suspicion of being a drug dealer or some kind of criminal.”

“Yeah, but if he--” Darcy began before Tony tched loudly and waved an irritated hand to shut her up.

“Darcy, at best, you have made what? Sixty thousand a year?”

“Forty-three,” she muttered, folding her arms over her chest and glaring at Tony over her glasses.

“Lo, you did all of your financial transactions through Jarvis, so except for your gold bullion transactions for various nefarious purposes, I get that you don’t have a lot of experience with our monetary system.”

“Gold bullion?” Darcy mouthed at Loki who nodded and shrugged.

“Anyhow. Please do not allow Ms. Forty-Three-Thousand-a-year to give you financial advice. Now, I don’t really care what you buy as long as it’s not something illegal or dangerous, but are you sure you don’t want to tell me? I could probably help?”

Loki spent several long moments studying him thoughtfully, apparently weighing the pros of his assistance against the cons of his being in on the secret. After maybe two minutes he shook his head.

“Thank you, Tony, but no. Really, I do want to keep this purchase private.”

It took a bit of persuading, mostly because Darcy kept side tracking them, but in the end, they agreed that Jarvis would handle the finances for whatever purchase Loki made and he would absolutely not do anything that would allow Tony to know what the item was.

Privately, Tony was betting that Loki would very shortly be making some gold coin dealer very happy. He sent Jarvis a quick text instructing him that while providing whatever purchasing assistance his tall sexy Asgardian bundle of joy needed, to make sure the god didn’t run afoul of any laws or sales tax requirements, or anything like that. It was, of course, vaguely possible that Loki was planning on buying something here that was more valuable in Asgard, but he didn’t think that was too likely. Logistics would be a bitch for one thing; Loki trying to transfer something worth that much money while still technically a prisoner would be another. So most likely whatever his god bought, it was going to stay here. And be something Tony wouldn’t notice.

Good trick that, Tony thought skeptically, making a mental note to have anywhere in the building that Loki might have access to after his little trip searched.

“If you know how to drive, we can take my car,” Loki told Darcy, causing Tony to look up from his phone so fast he almost got whip lash.

“Sure, I can drive,” Darcy smiled. “You don’t?” When Loki shook his head, she added, “Maybe if we have time, I could give you a quick lesson.”

“Whoa. What? No!” Tony yelped, horrified at the very idea of letting the Kia Rio Driving Air-head within fifteen feet of the Olds. “Lo, that is not the kind of car you take to the damn mall. Or the Diamond District or wherever the fuck you’re thinking of going. It’s not a grocery getter, for crying out loud!” Before Loki could start arguing with him, or even before Tony could even think what he had done to incur the wrath of the karma police, a thoughtfully frowning Thor and his main squeeze Jane walked back into the kitchen carrying their empty coffee cups.

“We are going out brother? I will be with the healers this morning; I’m not sure when I will be free to escort you.”

“Yes Thor, I am going out,” Loki sneered. “And ‘*you*’ have not been invited to accompany me.”

As the ‘*discussion*’ between the two ‘*not*’ brothers escalated, Tony buried his face in the ice pack he had been holding and once again wondered how this was his life.

“Let go of me, you oaf!” Tony jerked his head up to see Loki trying to wrench his arm out of Thor’s grasp.

Oh fuck no.

“I have gone about in this wretched city by myself before you know. And in any case I’ll have my guards, Ms. Lewis and even Jarvis with me in a way. What in the Nine Realms do you imagine I’m going to *do*?”

“Let him go, Thor.” Tony said in an overly calm voice, the only indication of his anger being the extreme precision of his pronunciation. Or so he thought, there must have been something in his voice that caused the blonde god to stiffen before turning to peer questioningly at him. Tony tapped on his bracelets, alerting Jarvis that they might be needed. Because there was no way in hell anyone was going to mess with Tony’s stuff.

“I said.” Tony’s tone hardened. “Let. Him. Go.” This time there was no mistaking the menace in Tony’s voice.

Twisting, Loki pulled his arm free. “Interfering dolt,” he spat, stepping away from Thor.

Tony’s hands pressed to the table so hard his fingertips were turning white. “Lo, it’s your car, but I really think Darcy would be more comfortable driving something around town that didn’t cost over three million bucks.”

Eyes still locked onto Thor’s, Tony allowed one corner of his mouth to curl a bit at Darcy’s smothered squeak.

“I recommend you take the Lincoln, that one will have enough room for you to take at least three guards. I know Jarvis went over basic Earthgard ground rules with them last night, but please remind them that they aren’t in Viking land. I’d prefer you take at least one of my security guards with you as a native guide for yours, but that’s up to you.”

Brows knit in consternation Thor blustered, “Tony, this is not--”

“Zip it, Thor. My realm, my house, my partner, my rules.”

Tony lifted a hand to wave Loki and Darcy towards the door. “Have Jarvis give me a heads up before you head home and we’ll decide if we want to meet up somewhere or just call for takeout.”

“Meddlesome fool,” The younger god muttered as he brushed past his not brother and grabbed Darcy’s arm. While Tony didn’t think Loki was happy, he got the impression that at least this time it wasn’t Tony he was unhappy with.

“But I want to stay and see the fight,” Darcy wailed as Loki hustled her towards the entry hall, the both of them closely followed by a Jane seemingly very concerned that Darcy intended to pal around with Thor’s crazy little brother.

“Darcy, how do you two even know each other? Where are you go--” Jane’s voice was cut off by the elevator door.

Drawing himself up to his full height, Thor crossed his arms. After perhaps another moment of waiting for Tony to speak, his blue eyes narrowed, "Tony Stark this may be your home--"

"That's right, this is my house," Tony snapped getting to his feet, moving so the heavy kitchen table stayed between them. "And I've told you before to keep your hands off of my stuff."

Throwing his head back, Thor looked down his nose at Tony. "Loki is a Prince of Asgard--"

"No, Thor, he's not. Asgard considers him a prisoner, property of the state and all that bullshit."

Lifting a brow, Thor retorted, "Regardless of what you think Asgard considers him, Loki is not your personal property, Tony Stark. He is my brother and a Prince of Asgard."

And wasn't that just a crock of...

"Noooo..." Tony dragged the word out, making no effort to keep his contempt for Asgard in general and Thor in particular out of his voice. "He doesn't really acknowledge the whole brother thing right now, for some reason." Tony smirked at the red flush that was overtaking Thor's complexion.

"Of course, if I was him, I'd be pretty pissed at you for starting that whole bridge mess. And if he wasn't mad at you for that, he definitely should be mad at you for letting the Idiots Four convince you that he had usurped the throne when your own mother placed him there. As for his status, all the documentation I was given states he is a prisoner of Asgard, not a prince, not your brother. So that makes him definitely mine; your dad sold him to me, don't you remember?" Tony took a moment to let a small smile slowly blossom on his face before he continued. "You were there when we signed the contracts, buddy. And you know what? I didn't hear you say a word when your dad signed him over to me like a piece of property. So I think it's a little late to be acting so concerned, or trying to play the brother card." After another moment of admiring the rising color on Thor's face Tony clapped his hands. "But hey, what do I know, right? Tell you what, why don't you explain it all to Rozmon and Schafer and see what they think."

Leaving a stunned Thor standing in the middle of his kitchen Tony strutted toward the hall mentally patting himself on the back.

That's what I'm talking about. Diplomatic and smooth... Stark Style.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - None that I can think of but if there had been some, they'd have been here!

You're Invited

Chapter Summary

Tony and Pepper are laying it down and telling it like it is. Tony also answers very odd questions.

Chapter Notes

Yay, the spacing problem seems to have been corrected. Or got bored and left, either is good for me. Yes, well chapter 19 is fighting me tooth and nail, and joy of joys I will be having a house guest for the next two weeks. There goes my concentration, so pretty much what ever I get done tonight it going to be it for a while. *le Sigh*

Beta'd by the wonderful tag team of Mima Mia & Stella, a big round of applause for both of these lovely ladies please!

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 18 - You're Invited

Comfortably dressed in jeans, socks and a vintage Iggy Pop t-shirt, a freshly washed and groomed Tony sat on his living room couch absolutely surrounded by paperwork. He was not happy with the nasty-gram Odin had sent down with Thor yesterday, but he was trying to ignore that and get all his shit done. Or rather all the 'shit Pepper thought was his to get done' while Lo spent the day buying who knows what with Darcy the Ditz and Thor spent his with the shrinks having his first real session now that they had finished his initial interview.

And didn't just the thought of that last one put a lovely smile on Tony's face.

"Sir, I'm afraid Director Fury has just entered the tower with more than a dozen other people, SWORD personnel, but the others I cannot currently identify." Jarvis said apologetically.

Tony groaned and he let his head fall back against the couch in disgust. "Jarv, tell them to go away because I am mondo busy right now and if they don't, I will sic Pepper on them."

It figured, the one time that he wasn't just jacking off with those damn shrinks, goofing around inventing something, upgrading his suit or playing with some other project in his lab... The one day he was actually working-working, someone wanted to bother him. Today had sucked since the moment he woke up, and the engineer was willing to bet it wasn't going to get better anytime soon. He pushed his reading glasses, which he didn't really need; up to rest on the top of his head and scrubbed both hands across his tired eyes. Thankfully the headache from the little kitchen confab earlier had faded.

Thank you, healing rune.

Tony's couch and coffee table were currently covered in contracts and extracts and progress reports and proposal summaries and... crap. Boxes and boxes of crap. Somehow, Pepper had found out that he didn't have any sessions scheduled and that Loki was out for the day. Somehow, she had latched onto the thought that Tony would soon be distracted figuring out directly purchased and smuggled Asgardian tech.

While the whole idea of a totally different take on the fundamentals of science was enough to almost give Tony a science boner... It did not immediately do anything for Stark Industries, bottom line. Hence, he was under orders to read, sign, approve, and critique all of the aforementioned documents...

Or else.

And for once, Tony was determined to finish everything as quickly as possible because, according to the note the queen had sent, he had only two weeks to get Jarvis ready for a new location and installed in his portable servers. Then Tony could figure out what else he was going to need as far as repeaters, power supplies, cameras, sensors and the like. If he was going to the land of alien science every other month, so was Jarvis. Therefore, Tony had been more focused than one of his suit lasers since he'd very responsibly taken the time last night to actually read the letters Thor had brought him. His goal today was clearing out every damn box Pepper had sent him so he could work on getting Jarvis set up with a home away from home.

Blinking and opening wide his tired eyes while he uncapped his bottle of water, he asked hopefully, "Jarv. Please make my day and tell me the threat of Pepper was enough to make Fury and his flying monkeys leave?"

"I'm afraid not, Sir."

"Of course not," he groused, taking a sip of his now lukewarm water.

"However, I have informed them that I require an ID from all of them, before I process their request for admittance."

"Good boy, Jarvis."

Tony hadn't even had a drink today. He wasn't even going to think about having a drink today. He had given Pepper a boatload of stuff he wanted done before they had to return to Asgard, but to get her to do those things, he had to process this stuff for her.

Virginia Pepper Potts was a cruel, cruel woman sometimes.

"Sir, Director Fury is demanding admittance again. In addition to several SWORD agents, he is accompanied by officials and agents from the Secret Service, the Defense Department, the Department of Justice and the Strategic Communications Department."

"Fuck." Tony stood up, putting a hand to his back and stretching backwards. "One official and one agent from each group, Jarvis. I'll meet them down on the conference floor in the small room in five minutes. Tell them they have one hour from right now to talk to me, so the longer they argue about who is coming in the elevator, the less time they get. Got that?"

"Oh course, Sir. Do you want me to give you five minute countdowns when you are down to thirty minutes?"

“Naw, start at twenty minutes.” Tony told the AI, snatching up the folder he had been working on and grabbing another one to keep it company. “Any idea how Lo’s shopping is going to be?” Snagging his Stark pad and tucking both folders firmly under his arm, he stopped in the kitchen and grabbed an oversized stainless steel Stark International mug and filled it full of hot coffee.

“Yes, sir, but unfortunately nothing I can share.” The AI said apologetically.

Pausing, Tony looked straight into one of Jarvis’ cameras, confusion lacing his tone, he had to ask, “He’s been gone a couple of hours now and still nothing? What the hell are they doing that’s taking this long? Getting their nails done? Visiting a hair salon? Exotic massages on my dime?” Which he could totally imagine Darcy instigating. Not that Loki would need much encouragement to tease Tony with the description of how something like that felt, down to the last little detail.

“No, Sir,” Jarvis replied primly, apparently not finding Tony’s comment the least bit amusing. “However, I do think that Prince Loki taking your advice and using the Town Car instead of the Oldsmobile is a heartening development for your future relationship.”

“Of course it was.” Tony shook his head, secretly gratified that Loki hadn’t just ignored him or driven the car into one of the garage supports to punish him. “Shame he wouldn’t take one of my security guards though.”

“I did try to convince him, Sir, but whereas he trusted me to follow the no over-ride command you gave, he didn’t trust an unknown human guard to have the same fortitude.”

“You know, Jarv, a good AI would at least let me see the recordings of what he and the Air Head were talking about in the kitchen.” Tony wheedled as he entered the elevator, although he was pretty sure Jarvis was going to shut him down...

“Unfortunately, Sir, they were discussing Prince Loki’s purchase, so the spirit of your agreement with him won’t allow that.” Jarvis said, sounding more brisk than actually regretful.

“It’s so sad that you don’t love me anymore, Jay.” Tony replied mournfully as the elevator began to descend, wondering if perhaps Loki was going to buy a business or something and cut Jarvis in for a piece of that action. He never did find out what the AI did with the money he’d made as Loki’s Literary Agent. Something that should doubtless cause him to lose more sleep at night than it did. He just hoped that if Jarvis ‘was’ buying a satellite or something like that to use for world domination, he’d at least buy it from Stark International.

OoooO

“Actually, it’s not a bad idea,” Tony told his AI while scribbling a few notes and then his signature at the bottom. “Let’s keep an eye on this guy and see if he can develop it and follow through.”

Normally, Tony would have watched the security feed so he could laugh at Fury as he argued with Jarvis, but today he just didn’t have the time to spare. So rather than indulge his delight in angering the Ex-Director of SHIELD, he instead plowed through a proposal, approved it, signed off on it and, as an added bonus, since his visitors wasted five minutes fighting with Jarvis, he even scribbled down some notes and ideas for the project head. *One proposal down, several more to go.*

Tony sighed. Being conscientious sucked.

“Stark! What the hell is the meaning of this?” Fury yelled the minute the conference room door opened.

“This?” Tony held up the stack of paper in front of him. “It’s science, Nicky, you wouldn’t

understand even if I explained it to you.”

Tony was surprised to see several of his senior security guards mixed in with the group as they entered the room. He was even more surprised to see a couple more of them standing out in the hall.

“No, Stark, this!” he growled, throwing a folder of his own down on the table so that it slid towards Tony.

“Ah, this?” Tony picked up the folder and gave it a cursory examination without even opening it. “Don’t know. I’ll have to look at it as soon as everyone introduces themselves. Oh, and you guys only have fifty three minutes, so you’d better make them count.”

After the introductions, Tony opened the folder to find out that ‘This’ was apparently a photocopy of an invitation that had appeared on the desk of the President’s Social Secretary a few hours ago. There were also copies of invitations that had appeared in the other offices that had sent representatives to see Tony. The invitations were for the department head and a senior staffer or in two cases, retired former staffers.

“Seriously? You guys dragged me down here so I could tell you these are invitations? What part of alliance invitation did you not get? It’s like a wedding but with more paperwork.” He pointed to the copy of the instructions that were apparently included as an extra insert. “Hell, you don’t even have to R.S.V.P. Just show up at the appointed time and place, or not. What the hell is so hard to understand?”

Apparently, even the Secret Service guys had decided to let Fury be their point man.

“How was it that those invitations which include your name were delivered to secure, restricted locations, Stark?” Fury punctuated, through teeth so tightly clenched that Tony was sure he was going to hear them crack any minute.

“How the hell would I know?” Tony replied belligerently, not even bothering to play nice, “Fuck, Nick, I’ve been buried in paper work since I woke up this morning. Now, I understand that all of us here aren’t geniuses, but seeing who issued the invitation, I would be willing to bet big money that they were delivered with something we Earthgardians would call Magic.”

“We pretty much got that one, Mister Stark,” said the senior Secret Service Official. “Possibly more to the point, is why?”

“Well...” Tony had to glance down at the seating arrangement cheat sheet that Jarvis had helpfully projected on the table near him. “Jefferson. I can’t say for sure why the President got an invitation; I imagine that was probably just to be polite. For the others, I would imagine that the Queen of Asgard issued those invitations as a thank you for the help those departments gave her years ago.”

This statement was followed by several long moments of silence.

Okay, he was already bored. The suits just sat there giving each other little eye twitches in some sort of secret government sign language. Just as Tony was considering telling them all to go to hell so he could get back to work, one of the Stark guards triggered his ear piece a moment and then reached over to open up the conference room door.

“Oh. Hey Pep. Glad you could join us.” Tony called out to his strawberry blonde rescuer to be.

And he was glad to see her. If nothing else, once Jarvis said that time was up, Pepper would whisk Tony out the door to take care of business. No matter who fussed about him leaving.

Tony took the opportunity to drink a bit more of his coffee while everyone introduced themselves to Pepper. Fury looked like he was going to pop a vein.

Tony was hoping he did it soon.

“Stark, just what the fuck were you thinking to even consider this kind of an arrangement, let alone going through with it?” Fury bitched as soon as all of the introductions were done.

What had he been thinking? Well, in the beginning, it was how he was a big screw-up. That day that Thor showed up instead of Loki had been the worst day of his life since Pepper had broken up with him for the last time. That, he hadn’t been able to fix, but this time, things were going to be different.

“Lots of stuff to think about, Nicky, my glands maybe? Loki, Prince of Asgard, is one of the hottest pieces of ass I’ve seen in forever.” Okay, that was really his number two reason or possibly three? Six foot plus tall, sexy, smarter than hell and as dangerous as a live hand grenade? Tony could never decide which was first in Loki’s order of attractiveness.

“Emerging markets maybe? Loki’s going to be Thor’s senior advisor in time. And that is, if he doesn’t decide he wants to be king of his own planet someday.” Fury’s face contorted in anger, but to be fair, the eyes of two guys from the Defense Department bulged a bit also.

“Oh...” Tony huff a small laugh. “Yeah, big surprise there, even to Loki.” A crooked grin appeared on Tony’s face. “He is not only a prince of Asgard, but he’s also the Crown Prince and heir apparent of a planet called Jotunheim.” Tony again huffed a laugh, shrugged and continued, “Who knew? Well, apart from Odin All Father, the King of the Space Vikings. Tony smirked and wagged his brows at Fury, knowing how much the man still hated Loki and anything to do with him.

“Anyhow, the All Father says if Loki decides he wants to be king, well then the Asgardians will put him on the throne. Three cheers for King Loki of Jotunheim and all that. Of course, that would make me a Queen Consort of Jotunheim as well as a Prince Consort of Asgard.” Tony threw up his hands dramatically, and made a ‘can you believe it’ face. “Talk about having an inside track.”

Fury looked like he was going to be having a stroke any minute now. The baby agents from the Secret Service and the Strategic Communications Department were not taking like mad. Every time they even slowed down, their supervisors would lean over and whisper something that got them furiously scribbling away again. Tony unlocked his phone and tapped a message for Jarvis to send him a transcript of what they were whispering about. Since they were all still whispering back and forth to each other and not wanting to waste even a minute, Tony pulled the second folder over and opened it. He read for a few minutes until Pepper tapped his foot with hers to let him know that it was time to rejoin the conversation.

“Anyhow, I’m not really sure that I’m down with the whole Jotunheim idea,” Tony told them, continuing the thread of his previous conversation. “Me, a Queen Consort? Heck, I don’t even like guys that much. But at least I don’t even have to be the girl in this relationship. That would be him... Or her, depending on what day it is.”

Fury’s lip curled.

Tony rolled his eyes at Fury and continued, “I can’t tell you how relieved I was to hear that. I mean, I was totally sweating that one, ‘cause come on. He’s not only older and taller than I am but, fuck I’ve seen him bench press a Bentley without even a super suit to help him.” Which was the truth; he had seen Loki tossing a car during the New York invasion. Tony just didn’t feel a need to

share with them what Loki's current limitations were. "If he didn't just decide to blow it up or change it into rice pudding or something."

Fury and the Defense people exchanged sour looks.

With macho crap like this going down for him, Tony really could certainly sympathize with Loki, who was stuck in a much more repressed realm.

"Yeah. Seriously Nicky. Look, the invitation even notes his additional female designation Loki Odinson Friggadottir. Apparently all Jotun's, which is what Loki is by birth, and a bunch of the older male Asgardian magic users, who had Jotun ancestors, are dual sex. Which would pretty much explain those mood swings of his, or hers? Well, he was mostly male then I think, but the buried tendencies... Ow!"

Lighting shot up the billionaire's leg as a sharp heel scraped down the outside of his shin.

Tony turned an angry eye towards his CEO. "What the fuck, Pep?"

"Just stop it, Tony." She hissed.

"Oh, come on, Pep. You can't even say the guy didn't have hormonal shifts while he was here? Hell, I almost love the bastard but even I have to admit when he wasn't on the mood swing, he was riding the emotional roller coaster."

"And that, Stark, is precisely why we are concerned." The senior Defence official said.

"And that, Tony, is why I didn't want you to start," Pepper growled. "You're just trying to amuse yourself, while they're taking you seriously."

"Why? The guy's a genius. Of course he's going to be a little different; it is one of the perks of true genius, you know." Hell SHIELD, well, it was SWORD now, but still, they ought to know that; they had been dealing with him, Banner and the few other geniuses they'd bullied into working with them for long enough.

"Oh, and Stark, we want to see a copy of this alliance agreement between you and the god of crazy before we make any decisions," Fury told him.

I just bet you do, you rat bastard, Tony said to himself narrowing his eyes and baring his teeth at Fury.

"Nope. Not going to happen, private agreement and it's going to stay private."

"Mister Stark, there have been concerns expressed that might prevent your... spouse--"

"Partner."

"Fine. Partner, from taking up residency here," said the senior Defense official, who was now officially on Tony's shit list. "We really do need some clarity on what exactly has been agreed to."

OoooO

So they wanted to be privy to all the details in the agreement between him and Odin. Details that would let them know just how vulnerable the god would be at first, just how tightly he was bound to Tony and Asgard as far as his behavior and actions. Details that would let the government know that Tony depended on the Asgardian royal family for his health and longevity.

Cripes, they still didn't know he had been given longevity. Talk about being compromised by a foreign government.

And that is when the fight really started. Since Pepper was in full swing, Tony looked back down at the proposal he had in front of him and started reading again.

While the Secret Service stayed completely out of it, Pepper, Fury and Defense went several rounds. Basically, it came down to Loki was tolerated last time because he was a powerless prisoner, however, now he wasn't.

"We have the right to refuse to allow him into the United States." Fury told her, with a lop-sided smirk.

Tony looked up at him and sneered.

"Oh, of course you do." Pepper said smoothly, laying a warning hand on the engineer's forearm, a small professional smile upon her face. "And Stark International has the right to move all of its manufacturing and research facilities to a more welcoming country. Additionally, all the funding that we give to various governmental and educational institutions would have to follow to support a move of that sort."

"Are you trying to threaten the United States government and this administration?" the senior Secretary of State official asked with soft toned menace.

"Of course not," Pepper said with a falsely sweet smile. "No more than you are trying to strong arm your way into what should be a private matter for my company's founder."

Fury stopped glaring at Tony long enough to say, "Your shareholders would never agree to the cost of moving all those facilities."

Both Pepper and Tony chuckled at that one. Tony's eyes never leaving the document he was reading, Pepper's eyes never once losing their calm assurance.

"Really? Even if they were told that if they didn't agree, the major stock holder and lead innovator of the company would sell out and start a new company in direct competition?" She asked pleasantly, hands folded loosely on the table in front of her. "I think they might. Especially if they learned that Mister Stark's new partner, the genius who made such a splash several years ago with his breakthrough physics dissertation, will most likely not choose Stark International to license and manufacture his ground breaking, continent spanning, transportation portals if Mister Stark is not the head researcher and principal stockholder."

"An Einstein-Rosen Bridge is not yet possible no matter what lies you might spin out for your stockholders, Potts." Pepper glared at Fury. "And Stark's snotty little jerk of a space punk hasn't even been able to repair the one he broke, let alone develop one independently."

Okay. No venom there.

Tony was busy, Tony was getting pissed and Tony was so not putting up with that kind of sass from the cranky one-eyed man.

"Umm, that is my hot tall prince of a space punk... Or princess, I don't judge. And there is a big assed difference between not being able to span a galaxy because you don't have enough of the power sources linked yet... and spanning a country or a single ocean. The only reason he hasn't got that finished up for me, is big daddy Odin keeping him tied up with the main job."

Tony shot a smug look around the room. “But hey, no problem. If the US wants to see some other country take the lead in an advancement like this, I’m sure it can be arranged. Just let me know and I’ll start scouting locations and have his mom issue invitations to the right countries leaders.” Tony gave them all a happy little smile, just to let them know that he has no problems in living in Germany or Australia. “And I’m sure his big bro, the future King of Asgard, will totally understand you snubbing his beloved baby brother.”

If they thought he was bluffing on this, they were very much mistaken. Thor would go spare. As for the rest? All of his intellectual properties were his, until he licensed them to Stark International. He was not paid a salary or given a material allowance so all of his research was his. And while he liked to keep everything in house, so to speak, every year he did license one or two of the smaller inventions out to other companies just to make sure he set no precedence with all his inventions going to SI.

“Stark, we could just try him for the invasion of New York, you know.”

“No, Nick, I’m pretty sure you can’t. First, because you knew that you couldn’t hold him and so you gave up your rights to prosecute him in exchange for the Asgardian’s rendering him harmless, which they did. Second, even if you did decide to piss all over an agreement you made with a powerful sovereign planet. Our own judicial system would throw it out of court due to him being unable to testify or even assist in his own defense due to severe complete memory loss, not just of the event, but of the three years prior to it, which would include, oh... New Mexico.” He smirked at them. “My lawyer established that years ago when you threaten this then... Or can’t you remember that?”

"And third, just in case someone did forget all of the above... A few years ago, Cap and Coulson got you guys to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement in exchange for..., ” Tony paused looking for just the right phrase. "Well let’s just say various considerations, for those acts which were done under mental coercion, since no one else who was mind-fucked was prosecuted for the things they did during that time, and to keep things tidy, it included those like New Mexico where he has no memory.”

Tony laughed at the scowl Fury was laying down for him.

“And on that last note, I might point out a few things I’ve had made clear to me over the last few weeks. Just a little free info for you, from Asgard, to me, to you, out of the goodness of my heart, so to speak.”

“Ready? Here it is. Asgard did not and is not punishing Loki for New York.” Tony waited a moment for the muttering to die down. “Let’s consider this logically, okay? As brutal as their judicial system is.... Especially for those whose actions bring dishonor on O-Shining-Asgard, they basically dismissed the whole mess. Now it could be because Loki’s dark green eyes were Tesseract-controlled blue the entire time that he was here... or rather until the Hulk body slammed him. Check your security footage and you’ll see that. Or it could have something to do with that whole ‘Torture Victim Chic’ look Loki was rocking when he made his first appearance on earth.”

Tony frowned at all of them, “I can’t get the old bastard to tell me exactly what happened yet, but he regards the memory wipe to be more in the nature of beneficial therapy rather than punishment. A therapy that was already being considered when Asgard had their little prison abuse problem and the All Father just decided to wipe the slate clean and tidy up his fatherly fuckups while solving his kid’s trauma. I think it was a bullshit move, but hey, I didn’t get a vote.”

Since that pretty much shut them all down on the topic of denying Loki the privilege to stay in the states, Tony kind of zoned out and returned to his proposal.

Jarvis started the countdown just about shortly thereafter and Pepper assured everyone but Fury, who was impossible to assure, that neither she nor Tony had any other information on the Chitauri. The remainder of the meeting revolved around the fact that there was no way that the President was leaving the planet, especially to go somewhere that they had no intel on.

Bored, Tony suggested they just send the Vice-President, after all he was expendable, yes? That comment got him no small amount of glaring from absolutely everyone. Fortunately, his offer to send Queen Frigga's Social Secretary a list of their questions with the group that would soon be going back to Asgard was met with more acceptance and that discussion lasted until Jarvis called time on them and Tony and Pepper just stood up and left them.

Despite their heavy protests that they weren't done with him yet.

"You haven't heard the last of this, Stark." Fury growled as Tony and Pepper neared the door.

"Neither have you, Nick." Tony retorted over his shoulder as Pepper firmly towed him into the hallway.

Just as they reached the door, Tony pulled loose from Pepper and turned regarding them all with a frankly nasty smirk. "Let me just give you one last thing to think about, guys. Wonderful things are going to happen because of this alliance. And you can ride my coat tails and be part of it, or watch as other countries reap the benefits of making nice with Prince Loki of Asgard, future Chief Advisor to the most important realm on Yggdrasill's branches. Without all the fruity and poetic crap dressing it up, in the end it all boils down to power and who has it. They got it, I'm going to get it, and you can benefit with me or piss off your one chance at supremacy in these areas."

Tony shrugged nonchalantly, because he honestly didn't care, but then he gave them all a stare rivaling the power of one of his lasers, "That stuff? Totally your choice. But let me warn you right now, don't you ever get in the way of my choices."

Chapter End Notes

FANFIC RECOMMENDATION - If you have not checked out **Those Sinned Against by Arkada** I highly recommend that you do so. It's an excellent Loki/Tony story.
<http://archiveofourown.org/works/1398931/chapters/2932537>

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - None that I can think of but if there had been some, they'd have been here! *****

Asset Grab

Chapter Summary

Couples should always have a budget talk before they get married. Ideally it should not involve multiple government agencies.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the ever so wonderful Stella! Whooo hooo, you rock.

Last minute revisions by me so any errors are mine.

Little Loki fans! Please go show some love, kudos and comments for an absolutely wonderful fic called Sir Tony's Apprentice by Weaselwoman
<http://archiveofourown.org/works/2325299/chapters/6961853>

***** As always TRIGGER WARNING in the End
Notes *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 19 - Asset Grab

“Has she gone yet Jarvis?”

“Ms. Potts will be leaving for California shortly Sir, but I do think it is safe to come out of the lab, she doesn’t appear to have any intention to visit you again before she leaves and seems to have calmed down a great deal since your altercation with her in the elevator.”

“Since she wacked the crap out of me and scheduled all those solo sensitivity sessions with the Crane Brothers you mean.”

“Sir?” Jarvis’ voice was slightly admonishing.

Tony made a face and rolled his eyes. “Fine. With Doctors Rozmon and Schafer,” He grumbled, his voice trailing off into a disagreeable hiss at the thought of the ‘*Mandatory unless you want me to kill you right now*’ sessions on how to deal with opposition ‘*Without becoming an over bearing asshole*’, her words of course not his.

“*What is it about being scared that makes you ‘double down’ until only ‘Tony Fucking Stark’ is left in the room?*” Pepper had yelled smacking him twice in the back of the head before he scooted into a corner of the elevator.

“Hey, I wasn’t scared,” Tony had protested, ducking down a bit and holding up his folders to protect himself from being smacked again. “I don’t do scared.”

“*Bullshit Tony! Fury scares the crap out of you and you know it. That’s why you always act like*

such a complete Fuck Wad when he's around."

After she was done outlining the steps that he 'was' going to take to teach him better fear coping skills than calling on his 'Tony Fucking Stark' persona she had allowed him to escape to his lab with the proviso that if he didn't finish every single thing she had sent him before she had to leave for home that evening she would be back down to visit him, and he really wouldn't like it.

It had been over an hour since he'd sent the last batch down to her office and as much as he loved him some Pepper, Tony was very much looking forward to not seeing her again until it was time to leave for Asgard.

"Sir?"

"Humm?" Tony hummed distractedly while turning the axis of the design he was trouble shooting totally unasked for as a sort of bonus appeasement for Pepper.

"Sir?!"

The problem had to be in the power transfer block. He told himself leaning back in his station chair and giving it a spin. But for the life of him he couldn't imagine why. It was a standard module that had been used on the previous model with no problems what so ever.

"SIR!" Jarvis shouted, pumping up the volume of all the speakers in the lab so that his voice practically vibrated all the solid surfaces.

Aghhh! Tony jumped, he grabbed on to the arms of his chair as his abrupt movement caused it to lurch to the left, almost tipping him out of it.

"What the hell Jay!"

"Sir, Prince Loki and his brother are having an altercation; I think it would be advisable for you to break it up before they come to blows."

Scrambling to his feet Tony looked around frantically, trying to decide the best course to take.

"What the situation Jarvis?"

"No blows as yet, but Prince Loki might be in danger of breaking his finger as hard as he is jabbing it in Mister Odinson chest."

"Fuck!" Tony sprinted through the security doors and into the already opened elevator. "Where are they?"

"In the penthouse living room Sir."

Bouncing impatiently while the elevator doors shut, Tony thought for a second. "Jay, get the suit gantry ready in case I need it."

OoooO

Tony boiled out of his private elevator and could immediately hear the two Asgardians shouting at each other. All but skidding into the living room the first thing he saw was Loki's dark grey suit coat and tie discarded on a chair. Sweeping his eyes towards Loki's preferred window seat he saw Thor, arms crossed over his grey Stark Industries gimmie shirt, Mjölnir looking ridiculous hanging from a belt loop of his blue jeans trying to loom over his brother who was having none of it.

“You might as well leave Thor, Stark is on his way up, and he isn’t pleased.”

“Come now, even when you had your powers you never had the gift of true sight Loki.” Thor chided, continuing to lean into his brother’s space.

And didn’t Loki look pissed about being reminded about his missing powers.

“No you fool, I didn’t. But I can see and reason,” He snarled, “You apparently cannot.” Seemingly disgusted with both Thor’s meddling behavior and his inability to pick up any clue more subtle than a battle axe, Loki gestured sharply towards the lights brightening outside the window. As he pointed the landing pad machinery could clearly been seen smoothly lifting and sliding towards the door leading into the penthouse. “Obvious Stark is angry with you or Jarvis would not be readying his suit for deployment, you should leave now, before he gets here.”

“No.” Thor’s stance widened belligerently, and most likely by habit he placed one hand on Mjölnir’s handle. “I’m not going anywhere until I know where you were all day and what you bought that no one is supposed to know about.”

“Where I went and what I did is none of your damned business Odin-son!” Loki spat, face flushed, jaw set and apparently not moving an inch no matter how close his not-brother crowded. “But then you always did have a habit of sticking your nose in to other people’s business.”

“She is Jane’s friend and I would like to be assured that where you went or what you bought did not endanger her in anyway.”

As if Thor didn’t know damn good and well that nothing had happened to that Darcy chick, Tony thought rolling his eyes and heading over towards the arguing siblings. Jarvis has told him how the big lug had almost been trampled not thirty minutes ago when he stood between Ditz girl and the drawer the take-out menus were in.

“We went shopping Thor, how could that endanger her?” Mimicking Thor by folding his own arms, Loki matched him belligerent glare for belligerent glare. “Is there something inherently risky about purchasing items in Midgard that I am somehow unaware of? Is there something so hazardous about the process that even in the company of three highly trained guards she was endangered? Have you spoken with Aldfrig Hesthson about your concerns? In fact why are you even asking me? Why haven’t you just asked them to tattle my personal business to you? And besides, as long as my new owner is satisfied with my behavior--”

“Hey, none of that,” Tony interjected quickly, not wanting Loki to go off on another riff on *‘that’* subject, he absolutely did not want to get into another situation today where he might say the wrong thing again. Especially not with Pepper still in the building.

“I have, but they claim you did not go to any kind of a normal shop, but rather you spoke privately to a factor of some sort,” The big blonde rumbled, “I do not seek to pry into your personal affairs but I would not like to see you to get into trouble if it could be avoided, or have Darcy become entangled in your mischief.” Exasperated at his brother’s stubbornness, Thor ran his fingers irritable through his hair before dropping them to his sides. He turned his next question to Tony with more than a hint of accusation in his voice. “Darcy claimed not even you knew where my brother was this afternoon, nor what he bought even though he was using your money. Stark, how could you allow this? What if he has done something that will angered father?”

With a heartfelt sign, Tony dropped his head and looked at Thor from under his brows. “Lo did you buy anything dangerous or illegal?” He asked, trying to tone down the ridicule enough to keep it from being too obvious to the upset blonde.

“No, of course not.” Loki said disgustedly. “We did have an agreement after all.”

“Morally reprehensible? We aren’t expecting a group of hot and cold running hookers are we?”

Loki tched, “Sadly no to both of those.”

“Well then there ya go Big Guy.” Tony reached up as best he could and clapped an arm around Thor’s shoulder, turning him towards the entry hall. Thor went to shrug him off, looking puzzled when he couldn’t. “Nothing illegal, dangerous or naughty. Works for me. So, Jarvis how long until the takeout gets here?” Tony asked steering the frowning god back towards the entry way.

“Perhaps another Twenty to Twenty five minutes Sir.” The AI replied as they reached the ramp.

“Good, good. Tell ya what Jay. Have the security desk pull out the stuff you ordered for me and Rudolf and send the rest to the guest suite.” Tony patted Thor on the shoulder and then gave him a bit of a push towards the entry hall. “It’s been a long day buddy. And Lo and I probably don’t have too much more time before Eir gets here and he has to go back, so I know you won’t mind if we just have a quiet evening to ourselves tonight right?”

Thor actually took two steps towards the ramp before drawing himself and turning to look at Tony with knit brows and troubled blue eyes. Dogs trying to figure out why they couldn’t bite the moving red dot of a laser pointer had nothing on the sorrowful confused expression the thunder god was giving him.

“Good night Thor,” Loki said with a maliciously cheery wave, seemingly heartened by his not-brother being shoved out of the apartment. “I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Hey Thor,” Tony called when he was almost to the top of the ramp. “Do me a favor buddy and tell Loki’s guards in the entry hall to stay put either there or in the kitchen unless me, Loki or Jarvis calls for them will ya? And Jarvis, make sure you send up some dinner for them too will ya?”

Jarvis acknowledged his request and Thor nodded. If the blonde god’s wishes for them both to have a pleasant evening were not uttered with his normal exuberant tone... Well, Tony was sure Lassie would be back to his old, bouncing, ball chasing self by morning.

“Thor looked like he was dragging his feet a bit as you towed him across the room.” Loki said placing an arm across his shoulders and glancing sideways at Tony. “You used your Extremist strength on him didn’t you?”

“Yep. Mind you he could have pulled away from me if he wanted to; I’m stronger than a normal human, but nowhere near as strong as Pikachu. I think he was just surprised that I could move him at all without the suit.” Tony’s eyes gleamed, “You know, I may not be quite as strong as a Thunder God, but I bet could bench press a Trickster God if he’d let me.”

“Bench press?” The god questioned with raised brows and a sly smile while tapping his lower lip with a shapely forefinger.

“Weight lifting term.” The engineer said with hesitant grin of his own, “Although I would not be opposed to actually bending or being bent over a bench, or really any article of furniture you choose.”

Loki inclined his head regally, and then eyes widening in mirth he pressed his lips tightly together, trying unsuccessfully, to hold back a sound that could only be described as a snigger. Taking Tony’s hand he started towing the unresisting playboy towards the media room.

“Come Stark. Unless you run and hide again behind your locked bedroom door I intend to ‘almost’ have my wicked way until dinner arrives. And then after we eat Jarvis can play one of those mindless animated cartoons you are so addicted to while I rub myself all over you and whisper absolutely filthy things in your ears until you are positively aching.” Loki spun Tony around letting go of him at just the right moment for the engineer to stumble against the main sofa of the media rooms pit group. Already off balance, Tony was pounced on by his sexy godling and pushed back against the cushions. “Now doesn’t that sound like fun?” Loki asked, pulling back and smiling at him suggestively.

“You’re kidding me right?” Tony gasped as clever fingers squeezed him in his happy place.

“Well fun for me at least,” Loki laughed letting go of ‘little Tony’ and sliding his hands up under the playboys shirt, stripping it off of him in an extremely well-practiced move. Settling himself firmly where his hand had been only seconds before, Loki slowly rotated his hips. “If it makes you feel any better I have decided to officially forgive you, ‘in all ways’, after our Joining feast.” He dipped his head down to nip at Tony’s jaw. “Won’t that be nice?”

“Wonderful, but right now? Right now you’re killing me, you know that don’t you.”

“Oh surely not Tony.” Loki purred into his ear. “Tonight, I only want to make you wish you were dead.”

OoooO

Tony and Pepper were sitting in a guest suite on the far side of the family wing. They were going over some final arrangements on the way Tony’s Asgardian accounts were going to be set up when one of those tall, big, totally scary Einherjar dudes with his clacking armor walked in. Scary dude did the whole chest clacking thing and then boomed out, “Man of Iron, Prince Thor sends for you and the Lady Potts to join him in the throne room immediately.”

“Uh huh.” Tony quirked a brow. “Did he say why?”

“The All Father wishes to consult with you.”

Tony looked at Pepper for along moment, neither one of them having a clue what the fuck was up this time. Apparently they looked too long because scary dude rapped his spear butt impatiently on the ground. “Immediately. I am to escort you.” When neither of them made a move the immortal guard frowned before looking straight ahead and intoned, “The All Father requires your presence now.”

“Fine, fine. We’re coming, don’t get your bracers in a twist or anything,” Tony said as Pepper huffed and gathered up the papers they were working on.

OoooO

The room wasn’t full by any means, it was a big fucking room, but Tony saw way more Earthgardians than he thought were even invited to the ceremony, let alone ones who might personally have business with King All Father. This was a completely unwelcome surprise, unwelcome like having to deal with Odin when Frigga wasn’t present. Like finding out you needed a major root canal right after you’d just opened a congressional summons. That kind of unwelcome. While Tony recognized several of the people gathered at the foot of the throne, not a one of them was anyone he would want to see. With maybe the exception of Agent Coulson. Tony kinda liked Coulson if only for his entertainment value.

“So, how is everyone today?” Tony asked in a far more genial voice that he was actually feeling. Not that actually he gave a flying flip about how they were doing. “Everyone ready for a really great party? I personally am ready to get completely and totally ripped.” Thor, who was standing on a lower landing of the throne, widened his eyes, warning Tony to behave and gave him a small discreet head shake.

“Your Majesty,” One of the suits called out. “While we of course hold Mister Stark in high regard as both a hero of our country and a respected industrialist. It really can’t be argued that he does not exactly have the temperament of a diplomat, and as we said, we would much prefer to pick our own ambassador.”

“Ambassador? Of Earth? Me?” Rearing back a bit, Tony spun and threw a confused look at Pepper who had followed him to the foot of the stairs, and then turned back to see Thor give him a tiny nod of his head.

Ambassador Stark? Why? Tony certainly never agreed to become a representative of Earth, or at least not an official one.

Odin said calmly, “By virtue of his alliance with my younger son, Anthony Stark will automatically be granted the title of Prinsgemal,” Taking note of the numerous puzzled expressions Odin elaborated, “Prince Consort. As the only ranking member of Midgard within Asgard, he will be the channel through which your realms concerns are presented to my court.”

That was certainly news to Tony and he could totally see how this might dismay the government suits since he barely paid attention to Stark International concerns, and he owned the damn company.

“Excuse me, Your Majesty.” A voice very familiar to Tony called out. The group gathered below the throne separated, and Nick Fury in all his one-eyed glory moved to the front of the group looking up at Odin with a sour expression. “If Stark does something stupid to—aggravate you, then what happens?” Every disdainful syllable he spoke indicating that it was not really a question of ‘if’, but more a question of a ‘when’.

One corner of Odin’s mouth quirked up in a very unfriendly smile. “*Prinsgemal Stark*,” Odin admonished, stressing Tony’s new position, obviously not amused by someone like Fury taking liberties by not using a title that the All Father was going to bestow. Totally ignoring the fact that Loki’s soon to be consort might not be his favorite person in what had clearly turned into an ‘us’ against ‘them’ moment. His smile widened a bit at the glare Fury was giving him. “If Prinsgemal Stark somehow manages to annoy me, then of course I will be naturally less inclined to hear Midgard’s concerns.”

“All things considered your majesty, we would prefer to name our own ambassador.” Fury’s own smile was little more than a grimace.

“Indeed?” questioned the All Father of the Nine Realms, his brow quirked in sardonic humor. “Well then, once Midgard can get their representatives here without assistance of any kind, we will revisit your request.”

“But in the meantime you will have the ability to deal with us through your countryman Anthony Stark, one of the heroes of Midgard.” When it looked like Fury was going to comment further, Odin stamped the butt of his staff down on the floor, essentially closing that topic. “Let us now turn our attention to this writ of confiscation that you are attempting to serve on my younger son.”

Tony’s head whipped back to look at Odin so fast he almost became dizzy. He noticed several

people doing the same thing but instead looking daggers at a small gaggle of officials. After a short exchange of absolute diplomatic nothings, Odin waved the gaggle of Earthgardians back out of ear shot and motioned for Tony, Pepper and two older guys to ascend to the first platform below his throne. Apparently, the writ along with a list of Loki's Midgardian assets had been presented to Asgard by about an hour ago when the delegation first arrived. "We have consulted," Odin motioned to old dudes who turn out to be his head lawyer and chief accountant. "And I have decided that only Loki's Midgardian funds, the royalties rights from his currently published books, and any patent rights that date from before the hand fasting can be attached and only then if all parties agree to accept this as full payment for all claims past, present and future."

"What patents?" Tony demanded with a scowl, trying to keep one eye on Odin while keeping the other on the document of assets that old accountant dude was showing to Pepper.

"Your Majesty, on Earth an asset grab of this sort, with this many claimants can drag on for years." Pepper told him, irritably surrendering her copy of the document to Tony after he kept tugging on it while she was talking. "Unless you give them a reason to make a decision binding on all parties right now, we could be arguing this for decades, if not longer. And with them trying to attach any future gains from Stark International and any Asgardian possessions this could become a major problem. I can easily see them using this as an excuse to trying to install asset managers to monitor both the Asgard properties and Stark International."

"What the flying fuck?" Tony interrupted the discussion looking shocked. "How in the hell did Bruce not tell me that Loki was a silent partner in his drug study?"

"Not really the point now, Tony," Pepper hissed out of the side of her mouth.

How the fuck could she even say that? In what was no doubt a major breach of courtly etiquette, he turned his back on Odin breathing directly into Pepper's ear, "Seven years, Pep, they've been collaborating for *seven years* and I didn't know about it. How the fuck is that even possible?"

"Not now Tony," Pepper ground out around tightly clenched teeth.

"You don't underst--"

"Not. Now."

Seething Tony flicked through the multiple pages looking to see if there are any other little surprises about his godling that he should know.

OoooO

"I have decided," Odin told the Midgardian officials once again arrayed below him. Tony and Pepper were standing on the side of the platform a step below Thor, while Asgard's head accountant and lawyer stood one step lower than them on the other side of the platform. "All funds currently accumulated will be placed in escrow and held until a final decree is issued. To encourage a speedy resolution, while the principal will be held in escrow, any interest gained or new royalty payments made will go to my son Loki for his personal use without penalty or hindrance until the agreement is ratified by your government and binding on all parties. From that point on, the escrowed money and all future payments will be transferred to the Asgard Benevolent Foundation, which will accept requests for disbursements to fix those areas still in need of repair, help the children of the injured or slain, and compensate the poorer citizens for losses that they could ill afford. My son Loki will be the fund's permanent director." Beside him Pepper nodded, relieved that Odin had gotten the title and terms correct.

“Bu--” Some forgettable looking guy that Tony had never seen before, started before he caught himself. “Sir, with all due respect, we should be the ones deciding where the money goes.” He started out calm enough, but apparently the whole idea of Loki keeping use of his funds and then being the one to decide where they upset him and the little group of weasels he seemed to be the spokesperson for. “And besides it could take forever to get everyone to agree to what you want, and by the time they do, the royalties and patents may have been totally paid out and be worthless. But in the meantime the criminal--”

“Hrrrrrhhh!” Odin shouted, striking Gungnir sharply on the inset metal plate beside this throne. “Have a care how you speak of my son, Midgardian!”

“Oh crap,” Tony interrupted, stomping front and center and down a few steps, his voice loud enough to drown whatever other ‘*Get The Earth Fried*’ thing that Bean-counter-man thought he should say next. Tony glared at the other assembled officials. “Seriously, which of you clowns thought bringing this up now was a good idea? And while we’re on the subject, just because he’s had the most dealings with Asgardians why do you keep letting Fury be your spokesman.” He called out to Fury who was standing in the back and demanded, “Was this your idea? And whose coat tails did you ride on anyhow?” When Fury just smirked at him and no one at all answered, Tony stared at them each in turn, “No, seriously. I want to know so I know who to bitch about when I get home.”

“Anthony Stark!” Tony turned. Odin’s glare was almost hot enough to burn him to a cinder, certainly hot enough that the marble columns on either side of the dais were in danger of melting. The head god gestured with his left hand to a spot near Thor. “You will stand there and be silent until I ask you to contribute.”

Okay... Not exactly what Tony really felt like doing right at this moment, not by a long shot, but a warning glance from Pepper and Thor reminded him that in addition to a big assed gold throne, the old guy also had a dungeon.

“Okay... Shutting up now.” Tony muttered as he slunk back up the first flight stairs to again stand right below Thor. Before Tony had even turned around to look down on the group causing this latest mess, Odin continued in a low growl.

“You seem to be under the illusion that this offer is subject to some sort of debate?” Odin ground out between his teeth enunciating every word fully and carefully. “I assure you it is not.”

Leaning back against his throne he fixed his eye sternly upon group that had apparently presented the petition. “I make this offer in the spirit of goodwill between our people. By the laws of Asgard and your own laws as interpreted by our head Logmar, my son has absolutely no responsibility to pay any monetary claims. This is not a penalty he is paying, but rather a gift to your people to atone for him not being able to find a less destructive way to stop the Chitauri invasion of Midgard. You can accept it as is. Or not. However should you not accept it, I will make sure that our head exchequer takes over his accounts and has all future monies converted and sent here as they accumulate. Do you understand?”

“Does he even consider himself your son?” Fury questioned calmly from the back of the crowd, “We’ve heard that the news of his adoption came as quite the surprise.”

Truth to tell, as a soon to be part-time resident, Tony was just a touch nervous. It was all very well for these guys and Fury act like a jerks, they would be gone soon. But Tony would be hanging around for a couple of days and would be the only mortal left for Odin to vent on. That could get scary in a hurry. Although, looking at the small crowd at the bottom of the steps, it looked like more than a few of them weren’t exactly too happy with whatever consortium of departments was

trying to plug the hole in their budgets. Or with Nicky's needling Odin either.

If you listened to legend, Odin wasn't shy about making people pay when they pissed him off. And right now from the look of his clenched jaw the king was really, really pissed. Beside him, Thor shifted uneasily.

As the All Father leaned forward scowling, Tony could practically feel the waves of hostility rolling down the steps from the throne.

"What Loki believes and what you believe is of absolutely no significance. I say he is my son, and so he is. You will acknowledge that. The next time Loki or Anthony Stark arrive on Midgard, it will be as my ambassador and Midgard will touch them or allow harm to them at your peril." Odin's one good eye narrowed to an icy slit of blue as he glared at the assembled Earthlings before focusing on Fury. After several long moments he lifted his chin, "While we of course desire a good relationship with Midgard, my patience is not unlimited. Odin smirked at the confusion that his words caused. "Oh yes, I am well aware of the '*contingency*' plans that were made by several of your group, you will find there is very little that escapes me when I turn my attention towards it. You would do well to make sure I have no further reason to turn it upon you."

Rising to his full height, Odin's ceremonial robes shimmered gold before his ornate battle armor, complete with helm manifested in their place. Giving him a much different presence than it had been moments earlier. Gone was the elder statesman, in his place was the warrior mage king of a near immortal race walking down the steps towards them. The nuance was not lost on the assembled Earthers. Stopping on the landing where Tony and Thor were standing, Odin looked down his nose a moment before striking a ringing blow of Gungnir's staff on the marble floor, he made an abrupt motion with his hand and the two elderly Æsir officials descended to join four others who had stepped forward and approached the lower steps. "Our head Logmar, chief accountant and their assistants will work with you to draft the Benevolence Agreement. I will review the completed agreement tomorrow morning. Early. "Odin's mouth twitched into a malevolent smile. "Now I must leave you, I have many other guests to greet." Come, Thor, Anthony."

Alarmed at the possibility of another impromptu tête-à-tête in Odin's private office, Tony looked wildly at Thor who only widened his eyes and motioned with his head that they were to follow Odin through the huge doors behind the throne. "Wait, Thor," he hissed preparing to run down the stairs to get his CEO and protector from all things with monocular vision. "We need Pepper!"

"Nay Tony," the Thunderer answered, "The Lady Potts will be needed to assist the Logmar, and the guards will escort her back to your rooms to prepare for dinner when they have finished."

Since Thor couldn't talk in an inside voice to save Asgard, Pepper looked up at them. While her brow was furrowed in concentration, she gave them a small smile and made a shooing motion in Tony's direction before turning her attention to the gaggle of Æsir officials. Clearly demonstrating to the other Earthers where her priorities lay.

Tony bounced a moment, undecided where he wanted to go, when he felt Thor's large hand curl around his bicep and drag him behind the throne, past two of the guards and through the huge gold doors. As doors boomed shut behind him, Tony wondered for the five hundredth time if maybe, just maybe, he wasn't in over his head.

OooooO

The black and green leather tails of his overcoat were swinging out behind Loki as he strode angrily from side to side in the largest room of the suite Tony had been assigned. "My accounts

being transferred to a Midgardian Wergild fund? Why?!” Loki was equal parts pissed and confused as he whirled, a vision of leather and gold, towards Tony.

Making sure that the huge sigh he made was totally internal, Tony asked as neutrally as he could manage, “Um. Did I not just explain this to you Rudolf? You’re a smart guy, which part of it didn’t you understand?” Seeing the rage bubbling in those flashing green eyes, Tony appealed to Pepper, “I did remember to mention it was just his Earthgard accounts right? And that it isn’t going to touch the Asgardian estates I’m re-settling on him?”

“Yes you did Tony, but I don’t think Loki much cares to lose any of his accounts, let alone his future royalty and patent payments.”

“Yeah. Let’s talk about those patents a minute...” Tony’s voice trailed off as he was pierced by the absolutely baleful glare that Pepper was shooting at him. He hurriedly changed track. “And nothing that occurred after we signed the contracts can be touched,” Tony hurriedly assured the angry god. “So they can’t touch your car and of course anything new you earn, patent or publish will all belong to you.”

Loki stopped a moment, seemingly relieved that he could at least keep his car, which thanks all the gods he had decided *‘not’* to have repainted, but then resumed his pacing. “Why? Why do I have to make this grand gesture of repatriation for Asgard? And don’t you think it might have been nice to ask me how I felt about giving away over a decade and a half’s worth of wages and hard work?” Loki made some complicated gesture and flung his hand out toward the heavily laden sideboard.

Nothing happened.

The god glared at his own hand and clenched it into such a tight fist his knuckles turned white.

“Not to mention my arrangement with Doctor Banner that has only just made it to the stage where it might start producing royalties. Nine years of work just taken like that because some petty mewling bureaucrats decided to lay the blame at my door for their mud ball of realm being invaded?”

“Of course they should have talked to you about it, but we are talking your fath--”

“Gggghhrr!” Loki whirled again pointing an accusing finger at Tony before he walked... Okay stomped back across the room slamming both fists down on a sideboard, making everything on it, including the heavy alabaster bowl of full of fruit jump.

“Okay...” Apparently screaming inarticulate consonants was a habit shared by *‘not-father’* and son.

“Your mother’s husband, otherwise known as the Æsir Head Cheese, should have consulted you. But he did work you a good deal.” Angrily flashing green eyes speared him. “Relatively speaking.” Tony hurriedly added as he walked over towards the god and reached out a hand, lightly tracing the pattern of Loki’s his bronzed gold vambraces with a callused finger. “When I get back home, I’m going to find out who all was responsible for putting the damn thing together.” Tony frowned and glanced over at Pepper who nodded. “And how did they manage to get up here to do it? There had to be a hell of a deal made to slip this past SWORD and behind the backs of all those other departments. They were blindsided too, and not very happy about it from the looks of quite a few of them.” In fact Tony had been wondering if this wasn’t also part of someone’s hair-brained scheme to get Asgard to just slam the door and ignore Earth.

“You know the original demand was asking to attach a percentage of all the money you ever got,

including your Æsir estates, until every single bit of damage was paid in full including interest charges on the unpaid balance.”

Ignoring the increased volume of Loki’s growl, Tony stroked downwards one last time before sliding his hand down to lace his fingers in Loki’s and placing his other hand on the god’s waist. “I still think he’s an asshole, but Odin wouldn’t even hear of them doing that.”

“How very generous of Odin to use my personal money to create an Æsir Charitable fund,” Loki jeered still clearly madder than a wet cat.

“Yeah, I kind of thought it was a dick move myself.” Tony said, taking the opportunity to get in a sneaky hug. “But hey, we still have lots of money, so you’re good.”

Rigid with anger Loki tried, unsuccessfully to tug away from Tony, “I don’t want to use your money Stark, I want my own.”

“I totally can sympathize with that. Honest I can. But you know, once they finalize the agreement anything else you do from now on is all yours.”

“Is it? Is it really? Or is it mine until the next time Odin wants to make a grand gesture with someone else’s money?” Loki growled, straining until Tony let him go.

Years ago, when the god had first been under his care, Tony had been really surprised that Loki was so obsessed with money. And honestly he was still kind of surprise to find out now that as much as he liked money, the god really didn’t want anything to do with spending any of Tony’s. Loki wanted his own money, why he wouldn’t say. But fortunately for Tony the Æsir Prince as a mortal was a bit of a light weight drinking wise at least when going head to head with Tony Stark’s oft pickled constitution. So it was possible if you distracted him, to get Loki sloshed enough to talk about things that would have gotten Tony thrown out a window if the god had been at full strength.

“I did tell you I did many stints giving audiences to the less well connected Æsir didn’t I? Well I am well aware of how the fortunes of younger sons change when the heir has an heir. I did plan on having a family someday. I wanted to be prepared. I would never want to see a child of mine in that predicament. Asgard is not kind to those who fall behind. There is no helping hand, bankruptcy procedure or ‘safety net’ like the ones on Midgard.

He had brooded darkly for many minutes. “And there are many ways to strike at the vulnerable that completely avoid the courts.”

Which Tony thought a lot about after having artfully questioned Thor. Asgard didn’t really have slavery; but they did have an awful lot of indentured servants. And getting out of that state was apparently as easy as swimming with brick. Or two. Debt was totally not something you wanted to fall into here; it wasn’t like you could even look forward to dying in thirty or forty years to finally get out from under it.

“Also, those close to an heirdom but not entitled to it, become targets for those dissatisfied with the family. After all they have less protection and less means to fight back the farther they are from power.” Loki had told him.

So yeah, while Loki’s fears for his future and his possible family’s future might have been a bit paranoid, they apparently weren’t without some basis in fact.

At any rate, Loki seethed about the unfairness of it for hours while trying unsuccessfully to focus

on some material shortage that had made itself known while his workers were shutting down the Bi-Frost job site the night before.

And occasionally he flung down his papers and launched into another hissing tantrum.

About the fourth time his god had started throwing a fit, Tony stealthily slid a hand in his left suit pocket.

But apparently he wasn't stealthy enough.

Loki snatched up a heavy metal vase of some sort and hefted it threateningly. "Stark, I swear if you dare to pull that can out of your pocket and try to shove it under my nose I will break every bone in your hand.

Sheepishly pulling his hand back, Tony instead patted the fine navy material and then adjusted his shirt cuffs before going over, leaning against the taller man and worriedly looking up at him. He had been going to merely offer it, but due to past instances, he could see where Loki not be thinking that right now.

Tell me honestly Bambi... Do you need a time out? A drink or two to mellow you out? A pound of chocolate maybe? 'Cause I can totally arrange any one anyone of those for you. But what we can't have is you going off on anyone. The damage you do will hurt you more than them."

Fortunately they were distracted by Pepper being passed into the room by Loki's guard. She had left about two hours earlier to make sure her husband Dale was doing alright. Waiting until Loki gathered up his previously discarded papers she beckoned Tony over to the far side of the large room. Thor wasn't kidding when he'd told Tony that the Logmars would have an agreement in principal drafted before the feast. Odin, Frigga and Pepper were invited make any notations they felt necessary and it would be redrafted during the some pre-feast reception line thing and returned to them during the rest period that would occur while the lesser ranked people were being seated in the feast hall. No such courtesy was being extended to the happy little band of pillaging pirates who had presented it.

It was a good thing Asgard legal document where short and to the point. Otherwise they would have never got through the damn thing with Loki jumping up ranting every fifteen minutes. He'd washed his hands of the whole thing and had asked Pepper to salvage what Midgardian rights she could for him, but he would occasionally stop pacing long enough to address bitter remarks to them about Odin, petty officials and Midgardians in general for three or four minutes before throwing himself back into his chair and lapsing into a sullen silence.

Although the budget consortium and Odin were the target for most of Loki's ranting, Fury was also named for possibly facilitating the asset grab in return for funding. The last was a reasonable enough suspicion that Tony couldn't wait to get home and dig up some answers to see if it was true. He was angry at Odin of course for setting him back to square one financially for the second time in fifteen years. Granted the first time involved more money, but the second time Loki apparently felt he'd had to work much harder to accumulate it. What with being a prisoner and all.

"I haven't even had time to convert any of it to gold and hide it," He shouted during his latest outburst. "Not one damn bit of it!" it. Loki probably would have continued pacing and mumbling and cursing under his breath... and sometimes at the top of his lungs... until the ceremony if Pepper hadn't sat him down and explained Family Trusts, and Limited Liability Companies and how one or a combination of the two, could be set up to shield any Earthgardian money he accumulated in the future.

She also tugged him down to whisper something in his ear about fucking with Fury, but neither one would tell him exactly what she said. The one thing Tony took away from this, if he hadn't already known it, was that Loki was very serious about being financially independent. Not just from Odin and his family but from Tony too. While Tony had never seriously thought he was stupid enough to end up with a gold digger, it was nice to know that he hadn't.

If only the guy wasn't so militant about it.

Fortunately he was no longer furious after his last chat with Pepper. And was even able to give her a small grimace-like smile when she left to see to her husband and rest for an hour before it was time to start getting dressed. However, his malevolent mutterings as he stared out the window indicated that his god was still; to put it politely, in a pissy mood.

Tony hated to see Loki in such a mood; He was worried the godling would do or say something to the wrong person and get himself in trouble. Not a good thing when Odin was also in a mood after just being challenged by some lowly Midgardian rabble.

Sitting gingerly beside Loki on the wide window seat he nudged him with his shoulder. "Look, I have plenty of money, you can have as much of it as you want, it will be fine, you'll see."

"It won't be fine," Loki spat turning away from Tony. "I don't want your money. The favors of a spouse, just like the favors of a king can be withdrawn. And when that occurs I would rather poverty not make me vulnerable to those who hate me."

"Look, I'm just saying you don't have to worry... really."

Loki turned to him with an expression totally devoid of all warmth. "How do I not have to worry Stark? I will live for thousands of years."

"Well yeah, I kinda know that."

"And you are not the type to remain content or faithful," Loki said in a voice so flat and lifeless that it was a tossup if his tone or his words were responsible for the blow to Tony's heart.

"So. So, you're expecting me to leave you at some point then?" Tony asked his throat tightening so much his voice cracked.

"How can I not expect that Stark," Loki said hollowly, "Your past history of relationships isn't exactly a ringing endorsement for long term fidelity."

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - None that I can think of but if there had been some, they'd have been here! *****

Gifts

Chapter Summary

Some people just can't resist pressies! Especially shiny ones.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the ever most wonderful Stella.

Okay.... Bit of a short chapter 'cause... Well this was a nice place to end it.... and due to RL my concentration has been shot and the next bit has been fighting me tooth and nail. So rather than have you wait, I decided to post this bit. I do hope you like it.

Note Note - My Beta Stella and I are thinking of working on a few one-shots in this verse. So if you haven't subscribed to this story and the series you might want to think about doing so.

***** As always TRIGGER WARNING in the End
Notes *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 20 – Gifts

“How can I not expect that,” Loki said hollowly, a weary expression settling on his face as he refused to look at Tony, and instead stared with tired resolution out the window at the gardens far below. “Your past history of relationships isn’t exactly a ringing endorsement for long term fidelity, Stark.”

Okay, so maybe in hindsight, his past behavior as far as relationships goes wasn’t exactly something that Tony was proud of. Not that the billionaire hadn’t spent decades being smugly pleased with how he’d managed to avoid deeper relationships... And it could be successfully argued that he’d been a jerk when it came to dealing with how he avoided and then ended what few emotional attachments he’d had over the years. Not much moral ground to stand on there either. However... Tony stood and gird his loins in preparation for the task before him.

So. Okay, he actually straightened his tie and resettled his belt, but it was the modern day equivalent really. “Look, Lo,” He said, taking the god’s hand and with only a little tugging, turning him so he was facing Tony instead of the midafternoon sky. Now, Tony has always adored the way the color of Loki’s eyes seemed to change with his moods, how they become a lusty deep forest or an amused new leaf, but his favorite of course, is the vibrant shade of emerald green they get when the god is contemplating mischief. That color is his favorite. What he hates is when his trickster is sad and those glorious eyes turn a dull, flat jade. He finds he’ll do almost anything to make that color go away.

Tony cupped Loki’s face in his hands and tipped it up towards him. “I did promise I was going to

grow up. And growing up means solving problems instead of just ignoring them. So we will solve them. And if that means we have to have therapy breakfasts and brown bag lunch sessions for the rest of eternity, so be it.”

A tiny wrinkle appeared on Loki’s forehead as he considered Tony’s promise.

“Hey,” Tony smiled, tapping his thumb lightly on the god’s cheek to recall his attention. “Now, I did say I was going to grow up for you, but let me tell you, I have no intention of doing it alone. If I have to, I’m going to drag you kicking and screaming into a well-adjusted adulthood with me.” His eyes crinkled in amusement as Loki rolled his eyes dramatically, perhaps not entirely impressed with Tony’s insinuation that despite his many more years, the god more often than not acted less mature than Tony did himself.

“But I don’t want you to worry about stuff that isn’t important. No,” Tony said when Loki looked like he was going to argue with him. “Not important. Previously I may have been an uncaring relationship slut. No argument about that. However, I have never, ever left anyone I cared about hurting for money when we split up. Hell, Pep owns twelve percent of my company now and I don’t even want to talk about what Bethany walked away with. You remember Carol, the lady who made your soup when you were sick?”

Wrinkling his nose in a way that was far too cute for Tony’s current mental comfort, Loki was obviously puzzled at what the cleaning lady had to do with this conversation; he gave Tony a questioning look. “Yes, but--”

“Invite her over for lunch sometime when you’re on Midgard, and ask what she thought of her severance package when she retired from being my personal housekeeper.” Seeing the trickster’s eyes again unfocused in thought, Tony folded the surprisingly unresisting Trickster close, wishing for the thousandth time that the guy didn’t wear so many layers of leather.

“I can’t honestly say we’ll be like soul mates forever or anything like that,” Tony told him, pressing a kiss on the top of the Trickster’s head and pulling him closer. “Because quite honestly, while I’m a thoughtless jerk, you’re a manipulative brat.” He tightened his arms as Loki stiffened momentarily then relaxed with a disbelieving huff. “But I can tell you,” He whispered into the silky black hair, “that I would never let you suffer in poverty so long as I had the means to prevent it.”

Tony relished the sensation of having his arm wrapped around the trickster who was tucked up against his chest. “You know, your not-dad is an asshole, and having people touch your stuff? Or worse, take your stuff? I totally understand how that can piss you off. I get that. But honestly, right now? Nothing we can do about it. And this is me saying that, and that’s not something you normally would hear me say. But... Later, Odin’d better watch his ass, cause both of us working together, we can fuck his shit up.”

“Why do you care? Does this not work better for you that I am more dependent? I’m sure that is part of why he did it.” Loki asked, without moving from Tony’s arms, his voice curious in a detached kind of way..

Frowning, Tony looked down, not that he could see anything but a glossy head of hair, since Loki apparently wasn’t planning on looking up at him right now. If his god even remotely thought he would be glad about someone taking his stuff... Well, they obviously needed to do a lot more of those stupid trust exercises.

Okay, not-so-stupid trust exercises, he told himself suppressing a major sigh.

“Look, why wouldn’t I care? Think about it, even if I didn’t care that it upsets you, which I totally do, since we signed that contract, what’s mine is yours, so that means what’s yours is mine. And I don’t like people touching my stuff. And that now means, I don’t like people touching ‘*your*’ stuff,” He said, hoping he could make Loki understand that he never wanted him not to have his own money.

“So the first thing we do is to set it up so at least on Midgard he can’t do it again. Would I be safe in assuming that you have a stash of gold somewhere up here that no one knows about?” He waited a second and after no indication that Loki was going to answer, he leaned back while gently pulling Loki’s head back using his grip on the god’s hair, so he could at least make eye contact.

“No, Stark, I don’t” said the incredibly innocent, butter wouldn’t melt in his mouth, trickster god now looking up at him.

“Yeah... Right.” Tony drawled with a modified eye roll. “Anyhow, that hiding gold thing you were screaming about? Totally doable. We can do that every month. Is it fine that you’re starting over again? Hell. No. But we can fix it. You and Bruce? I’ve gotta tell you Rudolf, I’m a bit jealous you two are doing science without me, but you go ahead and think up the next advance you want to slip down to Earth and I’ll go in partners with you guys, and this time it won’t take seven years for it to start paying off.”

Loki’s brow furled as he tilted his head to study Tony. “I wasn’t aware that those clinical trials could be rushed.”

“They can’t be, but there must be a ton of other things on this rock we can develop, and you’ll get a cut of all of it since you’ll be our native guide.”

“So you’re trying to tell me it will be alright?” The young god questioned. His normal cynical disbelief seemingly warring with something that seemed to sound a bit like cautious optimism.

“Of course I am, you just watch and see how well we do together. In fact,” Tony ruthlessly hugged Loki, provoking a muffled protest, and after pressing one more kiss on the top of the trickster’s head, he bounded towards several boxes on the small side table in the dining nook.

But it was a dignified bound, like astronauts on the moon, and not the least bit like an excited five year old trying to be the first to get to the cookie jar.

Sporting a crooked smile that was half amusement and half apprehension, Tony returned carrying a large black leather case shaped like a flat square. The top of the box was deeply embossed with a design based on Loki’s signet seal; a detailed horned helmet silhouette in the center, encircled by an exquisitely designed snake, both parts of the design accentuated with a greenish bronze dye. “Here,” Tony said, thrusting the box at him. “I can’t swear it’s as ‘*exquisite*,’” he made air quotes with his fingers. “As your original set, but it’s the absolute best that I could do on short notice.”

Long fingers curled around the box, until Loki found and triggered the hidden catch on the front. The light grey velvet interior had dozens of individual pockets for the emerald and gold hair ornaments. Loki’s brows flew up and a delighted expression flashed across his face as he took in the contents of the case. Which were pretty impressive if Tony may say so himself. While he had, of course, bought tons of jewelry for himself and others over the course of the years, helloooooo billionaire playboy, he had never bought anything quite as large, involved, or expensive as this set.

The case contained over two dozen emerald beads arrayed in two rows across the top of the box, below them were drops of various sizes hanging from differing lengths of black filaments all attached to gold beads. Mixed in amongst the drops, a few of the beads had multi-stone strands

dangling from them that reminded Tony of tiny emerald tennis bracelets. Nestled at the very bottom of the case were two gold handled wire threaders for lacing thin strands of hair through the beads.

“A Silda-raana Lintitinwe set? How?” Loki breathed, shooting Tony an incredulous look before continuing to examine the jewels with rapt attention. Green fire raced across the stones when Loki tilted the box to get a better look at them. “Álfheimr craftsman made, yes?”

“Yep. One set of Moon and Stars hair thingies for your diva flaunting pleasure.” Tony preened, more than a little pleased at how well his gift was apparently being received. Not that he'd been too worried. He had noticed over the years how Loki loved getting presents. And as his god had repeatedly reminded Tony, he was open to blatant bribery.

“Stark... Tony,” Loki corrected with a slight flush before he looked up to intently study Tony's face. “They... They're honestly quite lovely; I don't know what to say.” He stood and carefully set the still open box on the window seat beside him before turning back to Tony. Loki's expression was one that Tony hadn't seen in two years and he'd worried that he was never going to see it again, frankly.

It was the look Loki always got in the last hours of his annual visit. *I won't see you for a year and I want to engrave you in my memory...* That look. And as always, it was such an openly raw expression, so out of place on the normally reserved god that Tony almost couldn't stand the intensity of it. So he did what he'd always done before it overwhelmed him. He kissed Loki.

And as always during these times, Tony started the kiss off slow, barely touching his lips to the edge of Loki's mouth before gently brushing across them, torn between the sensation of the soft warm lips beneath his, and how the smell of winter rain was overloading primitive parts of his brain. Clever hands ghosted up Tony's chest and over his shoulders as Loki leaned into him.

God he had missed this.

Loki nipped at his lower lip and Tony couldn't help but smile and bury his nose against the smooth column of Loki's neck, and plaster small teasing kisses along his pulse point. Reminding himself not to get too excited, Tony nuzzled Loki's hair and settled in for a serious necking session for as long as his god would allow it, trying hard to banish the voice of reminding him that there was a bed in the next room.

In a room with a door that could hold off an army. A big soft bed, with a silky soft velvet comforter and huge plush sable-like throws, that Loki would look so good spread naked across, nagged his inner Playboy, throwing up an image of long lean limbs artlessly sprawled across chocolate colored furs. Tony groaned, turning his head so he could nip the god's jaw, before delicately running his tongue across the god's now half opened lips, accepting the invitation to explore further.

Apparently, his inner Playboy had *'not'* got the memo that if he wanted to fuck Loki anytime other than the upcoming mandatory consummation thingy; Tony needed to let his god take the lead. *'But they're really soft fucking furs,'* Whined the annoying voice, this time feeding him images of him and Loki entwined and lying on their sides in a nest of velvet and sable. *'It will feel a hell lot better kissing him there and naked than here and fully clothed.'*

“I have missed you so much,” Tony groaned as he came up for air, trying to drag his mind away from those crotch tightening visions his hind brain kept tossing at him, and remain fully in the ‘here and now’ of the Loki's mouth. “Two weeks was too long.”

“Come, Tony,” Loki sighed into his mouth, pulling him towards the window seat, pushing the

jewel case as far away from them as he could. Taking advantage of Loki sitting back down, their hands changed positions. Loki snaked his arms around Tony's waist, while Tony wrapped one of his around the god's back, and twisted his other hand in Loki's long black hair. After a long moment or two of getting settled, Loki slid back, pulling Tony down so he straddled Loki's lap. Provoking a deep, satisfied sigh from the god. Tony kinda lost himself for the next several minutes. Only re-surfacing when he realized that Loki had latched on to his neck, occasionally murmuring stuff too low to be heard while Tony rocked back and forth on his lap.

"Don't do that. We've gotta be good," he gasped, actually eliciting a protesting whine when he pulled his face back from where it was buried in the god's hair. "We... We've gotta be careful, Bambi," He gasped, "If we mark each other up, Pep will kill us."

As he sat up, Loki huffed and dropped his forehead onto Tony's shoulder. If it wasn't for Loki's arms holding onto him, Tony is pretty sure he would have slid off the god's lap and down onto the floor in a melted sugary puddle. He didn't know if it had been the sensation of Loki nipping and sucking on his neck or the sound of the god's contented voice in his ear, but whatever it was, he knows he doesn't even have enough motor functions to even get up and out of temptations' reach right now.

"You know," Tony said breathlessly, running his fingers through the cloud of black hair, smoothing out the tangles he had caused. "It's not that I want to discourage this, cause I really, really don't, but with the exchange rate those hair bobs didn't cost near what you spent shopping with Darcy and Jarvis a few weeks ago."

The head on his shoulder turned and Loki's nose nuzzled him under his ear. "It's not the price. It's the thought and effort that you recognized something I liked and went to such lengths to gift them to me, Tony." He pulled back, a smug, satisfied little smile curling his lips up at both corners, raising a taunting brow, "Although, most of the effort was probably Pepper's, so perhaps I should be bestowing these kisses of gratitude on her instead?" With that, the god shifted as if he was going to get up go hunt down Pepper.

Tugging hard on the hair in his hands, Tony pulled Loki's head back and gave him a mockingly fierce glare. "Oh no, you don't. You don't even think about going there, buddy," He admonished kissing him hard before growling, "Mine," And started punctuating each following phrases with a hard kiss while Loki chuckled in satisfaction.

"My kisses."

Kiss.

"From my tall, dark."

Kiss

"Smart, sexy."

Kiss

"Gorgeous, god."

Kiss--

And if the last kiss left both of them too breathless to do more than hold each other upright, well then Tony figures he'd done good.

It was several long minutes after Loki had quit humming before either of them spoke.

"It was a truly magnificent gift, Tony." He glanced sideways at Tony. "I give you my deepest gratitude, but I must apologize," Sliding a thumb across Tony's cheek. "I am afraid I don't have a gift for you." He stared at Tony solemnly, almost as if they two had not moments ago been kissing with abandonment. "The only time I had access to both funds and an opportunity was the day I was out with Darcy, and I confess I was so focused on my task that I didn't think of it."

Leaning back a bit, Tony gave him a hopeful grin and said perhaps a little too artfully, "Well... I did pick a little something else up while I was in the city yesterday. There was this strange little shop me and Aldfrig passed by..."

There was a small pause as Loki obviously found something in his statement that needed to be carefully considered before Tony continued. "You picked up something in a strange shop and it occurs to you to tell me about it when I confess I have no gift for you?" Loki was very still for a long moment, before tilting his head and looking up at him. "Why do I have frisson of dread running through me at those words, Tony?"

"Well, probably because you're a really smart guy and I'm a perv. But don't worry, Bambi; it's not *that* kind of present."

"Oh?" Loki raised a brow.

"Well, not really. Not that I'm adverse to buying that kind of stuff, but as you well know, I just already have all the good stuff."

"So far as *'you'* know."

Really? Is that a smirk? It is a smirk. Ohhhh. Tony's eyes widened as he considered that pronouncement. Okay then.

"So, we're going shopping tomorrow?" He mock pleaded, giving Loki his best puppy dog eyes. Which, once again, did not seem to work on the Æsir prince.

"No."

At Tony's overly dramatic slump and disappointed pout, Loki shook his head and amended, "Not tomorrow, a few months from now perhaps, when everyone is *'not'* watching our every move."

"Fair enough." Tony said briskly before straightening up and sliding shakily onto his own feet. "Wanna see what I got myself?" He jerked his head towards the small pile of packages remaining on the dinning nook side table.

Loki tucked one foot up on the edge of the window seat and leaned forward raising his hands in the air, "I say this with dread in my heart, Stark, but yes, please show me what you bought yourself at *'that'* shop."

Awww, Loki was mocking his air-quote. Was that fucking cute or what?

Tony stuck his tongue out and flicked Loki's nose, for which he received a playful smack in return, before pushing himself off and walking a bit unsteadily over to the table. He returned with a big grin and a small envelope. Pulling a stiff piece of paper out of it, he handed it to Loki with a flourish. "My Prince, may I proudly present your gift to me." He did an abbreviated version of that chest pounding bow that he'd seen everyone around here doing.

"Do not mock me, Stark."

"Perish the thought."

Leaning forward, Loki reached out to take the paper from him. Turning it over, the god apparently only had to glance at it for a moment before he recognized what it was. "An ink brand? *'This'* is the gift you bought for yourself?"

"Well, for where this is going to be placed, we Earthgardians would call it a temporary tramp stamp, but tattoo or ink brand work too, I guess." Okay, so maybe Tony didn't want to risk upsetting their fragile understanding by showing Loki the matching one that came with his, but even so, it was pretty funny to watch all the strange expressions and emotions flitting across his god's face as he turned the paper repeatedly over and over.

"And you really want to wear this?" Loki asked, obviously struggling to understand how this could be so, holding the paper gingerly between his fingertips and looking at it like it was a flat dead rat or something.

Tony rocked up and down on his heels for a moment before shrugging.

"Yeah. Sure. It'll be fun."

"Fun?" The god questioned in a dubious voice, looking at Tony like he had taken complete leave of his senses.

Tony nudged Loki's knees apart with his own so he could stand between them. Draping his arms over the god's shoulders, he leaned in and touched their foreheads together without breaking eye contact, "What I'm trying to say," his voice a warm lazy drawl as close to a purr as Tony could manage, "I get that you don't want to belong to me... But... Can I belong to you?"

Chapter End Notes

Wait!!!

If you are still reading this.... I would very much appreciate if you would click on the kudos button before heading to the next chapter.

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - Males Snogging and showing physical affection for each other, If this is a problem for you, please be advised it is present and read or avoid accordingly. *****

Styling

Chapter Summary

Wait! We're not done, there is yet another Pressie!

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the ever most wonderful Stella.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Anthony of Asgard - Chapter 21- Styling

If someone had told him that he was thoroughly going to enjoy himself this evening, he would have known they were insane. Fighting to keep his polite smile from turning into an enormous grin, Loki nodded to an old friend of his mother, graciously accepting her wishes for his future happiness before she continued along the line to next speak to Stark

Honestly, what was there not to smile about? He would soon be starting new business ventures with Stark. Tony, rather, who was going to provide all the upfront funding and would be taking steps to legally shield his funds on Midgard, while making provisions to conceal a portion of it in both realms.

And don't I just have dozens of ideas to consider for inexpensive items that could be exported or smuggled for high price re-sale and processes that could turn a quick profit. He had so many ideas that if it wasn't for the fact that he was enjoying Odin standing beside him looking about to explode, he would have been so lost in thought that he wouldn't even notice the people trying to speak to him.

Which frankly would have been a tragedy, in Loki's opinion, at least. Rather than the snide snickering that should have been his fate, he had rendered all of Asgard absolutely speechless by his behavior. Odin All Father was livid.

"Thank you so very much, Lord Hafji, Lady Blestra, I am honored by your good wishes," he purred delighting in their confused expressions. "Please do enjoy the feast."

OoooO

Just a short time earlier, Loki had spent a totally enjoyable half hour scattering soft kisses across Tony's neck, back and backside while placing the ink brand Tony had purchased right above those delicious little mounds of his. Loki had surprised himself just how much he had enjoyed that little interlude. And if it should have only taken him five minutes and a lot less smoothing to apply the thing, well, Stark didn't know that. He might still be trying to convince the little mortal to lay still so he could pet him, if it hadn't been for Pepper coming back to make sure Stark knew it would

soon be time to start getting dressed for this evening.

"What the hell are you two doing?" Pepper shrieked. They'd jumped, both so wrapped up in laying there talking quietly that neither had heard Pepper being allowed into the main room.

"Honestly, Pep, you don't know?" Tony had joked, while Loki sighed internally and peeled the paper off the already dry brand. Tony slid his boxers back up over his ass enough for modesty, or at least the tiny bit of modesty the mortal possessed. "Look, Pep." Tony called out in a perversely proud voice, urging her to check out his new self-declared 'Tramp Stamp'.

"Tony, why are you only wearing boxers and a pair of socks? I don't think you guys have time for that right now. Or maybe you do, it's been over a year, right?"

"Funny. Pep. Real Funny. I didn't want my clothes to get wet. But look. Look what I got," Tony said, turning just a bit so she could get a better look at the decorative green and black runes right above his butt cheeks.

"When did you have time to get a tattoo?" Pepper asked, leaning down to squint at it. "What does it say?"

"It's not a real tattoo," Tony wagged his ass a few times. "It's just a temp, and it says 'Property of Loki Stark' in runes. Loki's head guard AI helped me buy it."

It had been all Loki could do not to bury his face into one of the bed pillows he'd rolled over on when Pepper had burst into the room, and snigger like a youngling. Tony was a genius and yet he didn't understand that this was a different realm. Did it not occur to him that *'temporary'* might mean something different to races that live for thousands of years? Loki sent a silent plea to the Norns asking them to please allow him to be present when Tony found out exactly how many mortal years the brand would last.

"How did you even know how to spell 'Stark' in runes?"

"Duh, Pep, it was on the contract, remember?"

After allowing her time to duly admire Tony's folly, Loki slithered off the bed with a grace that he would later come to find out evoked both deep jealousy and possessive satisfaction in Tony's mind. With formality that would be more at home in Álfheimr than Asgard, Loki unfolded Pepper's fingers and lightly kissed the palm of her hand. Ignoring her wild blush, he thanked her profusely for arranging for the Silda-raana Lintitinwe set to be made.

"So, does it look okay against the jacket?" Pepper asked, looking eagerly around the room.

"Oops."

"You bought me a jacket to go with my Silda-raana Lintitinwe?" He asked looking curiously at Tony.

"No, of course not. I bought you a suit." Wrinkling up his nose, Tony considered this statement a moment. "Outfit? Ensemble? Fuck if I know what they call it in Melniboné. All I know is that the lady who used to be your personal seamstress worked with the tailor to make sure it would fit."

"You didn't show it to him when you gave him the jewel case, Tony?" Mouth twisted in exasperation, Pepper ducked quickly into the dressing room, muttering unflattering things about supposed geniuses. Tony just stuck his tongue out at her retreating back, stretched a moment and then rolled off the bed and onto his feet. He was pulling his boxers the rest of the way up when

Pepper re-entered the room with hangers in both hands. One of which contained the most gorgeous jacket Loki had seen in years.

Impressed, in spite of himself, he took the jacket from Pepper to examine while she laid the rest of the outfit out on the bed.

That it was a nod to his normal clothing was apparent in the coloring. Green and black with a lot of asymmetric layers of various silks. A fine dwarven material that looked like liquid gold, but which Loki knew was much more costly, lined the jacket and made up an intricate inset design on the front. The weight and finish of the silk ranged from heavily textured to finely smooth, but all were cut in a way that would, when he walked, part to show off the front of the close cut pants Pepper had laid out on the bed. Pants that were, thank Yggdrasill, not leather, but rather a heavier black silk the weight of which matched the green body of the jacket, they were also accented with matching old gold piping made from the same material accenting the jacket.

As with most high elf clothing, the light green shirt that went underneath the jacket was whisper thin, as was the soft leather of the black over the calf boots. Boots that Stark had retrieved from the closet while Loki was lost in his admiration of the remaining pieces laid out on the bed. The boots also had complicated cutwork inlaid in old gold, perfectly complimenting the design on the jacket.

And, best of all, there wasn't a damn ounce of armor on it anywhere. No shoulder pauldrons, no vambraces, not even decorative greaves on the boots. It would look as splendid and regal as any other finery being worn but with a level of comfort one normally only got when wearing their nightclothes.

"This is, truly magnificent." Laying the jacket carefully out on the bed with the rest of the outfit and tracing an appreciative finger across the leather work on the boots. He turned his head to smile at the two smug mortals watching him. "Not that there will be much opportunity to wear it in Asgard, but still, I am stunned and I do thank the both of you."

"Why not?" Tony asked, disappointment evident in every syllable. After tossing a glance at the outfit spread out on the bed, Stark made a face. "I mean, I get why you can't wear it tonight, official court party, your not-mom had outfits made special for us, ect. But other times? There has gotta be times where you're not required to wear twenty pounds of amour worked into your dress clothes. And it can't be considered uncouth or low class or anything like that, not with that elf dude swanking all over the place dressed this way." Loki lifted his brows at Stark astute observation.

"Despite what the Æsir would like to believe," Loki's voice very clearly making it plain what a low opinion he had of the mental capacity of the average Asgardian, "the inhabitants of Álfheimr are the most knowledgeable and refined creatures of the Nine Realms. Their only failing is that they lack the brutish belief that hitting people is the best way to get them to agree with you. So, no. This form of dress is no way uncouth or boorish, but Odin would not be happy if any Æsir of his court began copying their way of dress, if it were one of the family, even a false family member like myself... Well, he'd be simply furious and likely disown me." Loki finished with a sigh and a moderate to low level eye roll. "Again."

"Odin?" An expression of disbelief flowed across Tony's face as he cocked a hip to one side and crossed his arms. "As in the guy who is so desperate to get you back in the fold, settled down and working the family business again that he is going through this joining thing? That Odin? Would disown you for wearing a jacket without a bunch of mental strapped to it?"

Loki had to admit when looked at from that angle; it did make the whole disowning idea extremely unlikely. Not that he seriously thought Frigga would allow it.

“True,” Loki agreed, looking thoughtfully at the inlaid boots jewels and delicately stoking them with a slender finger. It had been after all over fifteen mortal years since he’d last received any clothes as fine as these.

“Unbelievable. Besides,” Tony continued, “I thought, since we signed that contract that you are no longer officially an Odinson, doesn’t that mean you can occasionally dress flash, or goth, or elf, without worrying about not-dad’s expectations. What’s the worst he can do if you show up in this outfit someday for dinner? Decide ‘not’ to let you become Thor’s adviser?”

And there was the thought that had been teasing the edge of his consciousness for the past two months. Trust Stark to yank it into the light without ceremony.

“Oh yes,” he breathed, a sly smile sliding across his face. “This, I believe, is what you’d refer to as an ‘All choices lead to victory’ situation. If he decides I am not the advisor Thor needs, I am free of that burden. If he decides to overlook such un-Æsir behavior I win by getting to do something I want for a change...” Loki could feel his grin becoming positively feral. “If he seethes, even just inwardly, I win by having the satisfaction of finally paying him back, at least in a small amount, of what he has put me through over the years.” Tony straightened in surprise as Loki flowed over to him, slipping an arm around his waist and pulling him close. “Marvelous,” He breathed into the mortal’s ear, “This could be much more fun that I could bear to pass up.”

“So,” Tony asked as slender stroking fingers slipped around to toy with the hair on the back of his neck. “You’ll wear them for me some night when we have to go to one of those boring dinners with all those sword swinging idiots?”

Loki grinned, his eyes half-lidded as he hauled the unresisting mortal closer, his arm tightening around his waist. “Oh, I’ll do better than that, Stark,” He whispered against his lips, “I’ll wear them for you, tonight.”

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - Again with the Males Snogging and a bit of Nudity, but honestly nothing to write home about. However if this is a problem for you, please be advised it is present and read or avoid accordingly. *****

Suprise!

Chapter Summary

Someone decides to take the scenic route.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the splendiforous Stella.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 22 – Surprise!

The look on Loki's face when Tony had trotted out the hair bling was worth every penny he'd spent and all of Pepper's effort. The tiny make out session, worth even more. Loki deciding he was going to wear them right now?

Yes! Tony exulted internally, restraining himself from any outward exuberance other than a quick fist pump while Loki was turned away from him.

Fucking priceless.

Okay, so Tony had a bit of a problem with instant gratifications issues, so sue him.

And... Fuck. There was Pepper with her face looking like a wet Monday.

"Loki? Tony? Are you sure tonight is a good night to do this?" Her tones indicating that it was so far from a good night, it wasn't even in the same realm they were in. "I'm pretty sure the outfits already supplied are what they want you two to wear." She rubbed her temples a moment before looking back up at them. "Loki, are you really willing to risk a argument tonight over this?" And didn't that smarmy bastard just uncurl from Tony and ooze over to pick up his leather box of hair bobbles and hold them against his chest. Long fingers splayed protectively across the box.

"Oh, my dear Pepper. You have no idea how very much I want to wear all of this." If Loki's smile had been anymore shark-like, Tony wouldn't have been surprised to hear Mike Rowe's voice issuing from the ceiling with a little descriptive narrative.

"Uh, huh." Pepper said, folding her arms and giving Loki her look of extremely limited patience. "You know this is going to cause trouble, right?"

A calculating gleam shone in Loki's eyes, totally at odds with the innocent expression on his face. Extreme innocence. His six foot plus version of Cindy-Lou Who would have scored a perfect ten, if of course there had been judges with placards present instead of just Pepper glowering at him. "Why? Tony gifted them to me. I would not want to insult him by refusing them."

"Plus it will really piss off your not-dad."

Swinging her gaze over to Tony, Pepper asked, "So then you know he'll be mad at you, right?"

"Piffft. Like I care."

"Tony."

"No. Seriously, Pep, I don't understand the problem." Tony said, walking over and recapturing his god's waist. "Sweet cheeks here isn't an Odinson or an Othinsson or even an Ingensønn anymore, he's a Stark. And we Starks are smart enough, rich enough and good looking enough, to do whatever the hell we want." He smirked up at the god he was holding. "Welcome to the upside of this alliance sport."

A look of pure mischief that gleamed in Loki's eyes, causing them to become Tony's absolutely fucking favorite shade of green... And so long as it isn't aimed against him... He really doesn't give a fuck who else his god is messing with. Asgard? Odin? Thor? Tony could totally care less about them.

"Besides, Lo here was made to wear jewels." Reaching up, Tony brushed a strand of loose hair back behind Loki's ear, allowing his hand to rest on Loki's shoulder. "With his hair, eyes and cheekbones, it's a crime against nature any day he doesn't wear them."

Loki took a step back and Tony hand fell away while the god looked searchingly at him, "How unexpectedly poetic of you, Stark."

"Tony."

"Tony," Loki agreed as Pepper muttered something darkly about kicking ant mounds but still held up her hands in mock surrender.

"Fine. Fine. I'm certainly not going to argue with the pair of you." Brows lowered in concentration, Pepper paced over to the window. Her slim suited figure outlined in the fading afternoon light.

"Fine. We'll send for your clothes and you can get dressed here. No sense letting anyone know what you two idiots are up to ahead of time. We have a hair dresser on call for all of us in case of need. She's supposed to be some sort of expert, so I'm sure she knows how to do," She waved a hand towards the jewel case. "This."

"And after you get your hair done, I can help you dress," Tony said with a happy little sparkle in his eyes.

"I don't think so, Tony. Loki, if you are going to wear this gorgeous thing tonight, I'd like to see it in its unrumpled glory." She threw a thumb towards Tony, "Before this one start pawing you." Pepper paused. "Tony?"

"What?" Tony stopped rocking up and down at the inquiring expression Pep was tossing his way. "I can be excited. Hell, today of all days I'm even supposed to be excited," he shot Loki a mischievous grin, "You are totally going to own it, aren't you?"

"Own it, Stark?" Loki asked, archly looking down at him. Fucking tall bastard that he was. "I'm sure I don't know what you are talking about, Stark."

"Tony." He said, tapping his trickster on the chest. "And I call bullshit, Rudolf. You know and I know that you are going to diva your ass in there, swan around looking all hot and smoky gorgeous no matter how much it makes those sword swinging buffoons choke on their mead. You know why? Because you're a Stark now and we Starks don't let anyone tell us what to do."

“Oh? And could it not be because I am the God of Mischief?” Loki said, smiling gently down at Tony a moment before his humor faded completely. “To be honest, I was not looking forward to being paraded in front of all of Asgard this evening as an acknowledged egri.” He shook his head and looked down at his boots a moment; Tony shared a worried glance with Pepper. “But then you gave me these gorgeous gifts,” When he looked back up, Loki’s thin lipped expression curled up at the corners almost of its own accord.

“Why should I be the only one uncomfortable this evening? Let us see how Odin All Father takes the future Chief Advisor of Asgard decked out as a high elf, in a venue where not even he can take offense lest it upset our allies.”

Tony had to suppress a flinch. The last time he had seen that twisting feral grin on Loki, the god had tossed him through a window.

OoooO

The rest of the afternoon both raced ahead and to a crawled to a standstill in a most disconcerting way.

Pacing from one side of the room to the other while waiting for Pepper to return with the hair dresser, Loki paused and snapped irritably, “Ymir’s beard, Tony, what is that ridiculous expression on your face?”

“What look?” Tony asked, walking over he laid his head on Loki’s shoulder and looked up at him soulfully. “This look? These are my absolute best Puppy Dog eyes.”

“And why are you giving me this sad little look of yours, why?”

“Because I don’t know if I can wait, and I think we both need to work off some nervous energy before tonight.” Tony cooed rubbing suggestively against Loki, which earned him a hand over his face and a shove. But it was a gentle shove and accompanied by a low chuckle, so Tony didn’t take it as a personal rejection.

OoooO

After an unsuccessful and extensive search of the Loki’s quarters, the family wing and the library, an exasperated Thor arrived to drag his not-brother to a meeting with his not-father. Which sucked of course, but fortunately Pepper had not yet returned with the hair dresser. When Pepper did return, she was fully dressed for the evening with the hair dresser in tow. And she arrived just as Tony was getting bored enough to break out his private stash of alcohol.

“Jesus, Tony, you haven’t even started to get dressed yet?” She huffed, waving the hair dresser into the bedroom to get ready for Loki’s return.

“How exactly are we going to keep this on the down low by the way?” Tony asked over his shoulder as Pepper pushed him through the bath chamber and into the dressing area. “I mean, surely someone is going to notice that the Earthgardian assigned hair dresser is AWOL?”

“Fortunately, Jane was already finished, we left her assistant working on Denise. She’s put in a call for more help to her shop. Two of Aldfrig’s guards will meet her sister and niece at the tradesman’s gate and escort them up here to help.” Pepper’s quick nimble fingers started undoing his tie. “You need to hurry. I understand the king has already called for Loki to give him his powers and when he’s done with him, he’ll be sending someone for you for that strength transfer. All parts of the contract have to be fulfilled before the formal announcement that starts the feast.”

Gently slapping her hands off the buttons of his shirt, Tony took over, he had after all been dressing and undressing himself with varying degrees of success since he was four. He finished getting his shirt off and began stripping down to his boxers while she laid his Asier clothes out. On his best day, Tony wasn't shy about his body, and hell Pepper had seen him numerous times in less when she was just his PA.

Attracted by their voices raised in argument about how Space Viking clothing went together, the hairdresser hesitantly offered her assistance. The outfit he'd been provided was pretty much the love child of a red version of Loki's fancy dress armor and his Iron Man suit. He of course looked good in it, after all, when didn't he look good? But he still made a mental note to refuse all future attempts to get him to wear Asgardian garb in the future. Putting this damn outfit on had been more complicated than the first time he'd suited up as Iron Man.

OoooO

“Seriously, Thor, why not? We can use that little side table over there.”

Without relaxing his regal stance one bit, or even looking at Tony, Thor just sighed. “Tony, we can arm wrestle another day. I beg you, my friend, please stay still. As soon as Loki gets here, we will greet our official guests.

So Tony huffed and looked around for something to distract him while he waited. In his personal opinion, this whole joining thing was fairly anticlimactic. Stand in a receiving line, greet the important guests, glance at the signed contract the details of which stayed private, swear that all parts had been fulfilled to his satisfaction, yeah that's my signature, eat, drink and be merry and boom it's done.

There was no grand church wedding, which Tony supposed made sense, because who would god's worship in the first place? But even so, there was no public exchange of vow or even oaths, contracts were everything, and the feast was apparently the Asgard equivalent of a notary public stamp and a court house filing.

At the end of a long wide hallway, Tony could see the guests milling around in some sort of enormous entryway. The guards lining the hallway and sprinkled around the receiving room were obviously wearing their pretty armor, different from their everyday gold armor in that they'd managed to add another pound or two of the shiny metal to it. Fuck if Tony could figure out how they'd managed that.

Loki's not-mom gorgeously attired in some richly detailed beige gold gown, was at the head of the line, with Eir waiting behind her. Next was Odin back in his elder states man robes, with that old lawyer dude behind him. Thor, wearing a fancy cape, but otherwise dressed much as always was in the space beside Odin until Loki showed up, then Thor would stand behind him as the Asgard equivalent of a best man and last would be Tony with Pepper, when she showed up with Loki, standing behind Tony as his chief council. How anyone thought that putting Loki beside Odin was a good idea, Tony didn't know. But apparently that was how it had to be. Traditions, you know. Tony glanced longingly over his shoulder at the hallway leading to the family wing, hoping that Loki would hurry the fuck up so they could get this damn thing started, but sadly, it was still empty.

Despite his best efforts, he couldn't quite make out what Odin was saying to Frigga when a disturbance out in the entryway caught everyone's attention. They watched the crowd part to let Loki's guards through.

Thor actually groaned, muttering “Loki was supposed to have entered from the family wing.”

“Silence, Thor,” Snapped Odin, straightening up and putting on what Tony imagined was not supposed to be a ‘*benevolent ruler about to have a stroke*’ look. In a rhetorical hiss that seemed to be directed at Frigga, he demanded, “When has that boy ever done what he is supposed to do?” Frigga tossed him a troubled glance and murmured soothingly. Fortunately, the royal couple had just enough time to get their game faces in place before Loki actually came into view and they froze with shock.

By the outraged intakes of breath, Tony was able to cleverly deduce that the parental units were seriously not happy with the sight before them, but honestly? Tony couldn’t keep a huge grin from spreading across his face.

Loki had not just decided to own his high elf look; he had gone out and bought the businesses on either side of him. In addition to his hair bling and killer outfit that he’d just been given, his god had decided to go full Dave Navarro and was rocking some seriously smoky eyes and his evilly delighted ‘*I am about to blow up your helicARRIER*’ smile. Not content with just letting the privileged guests gaze upon the totally non-Æsir look he was rocking, Loki had decided to come the long way around and thread his way through all the guests, so they could all get a close look too.

A tightly clenched jaw seemed to indicate that his appearance did not make Odin too happy.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - Absolutely nothing. Seriously. There is nothing to see here, move along. *****

Is there a problem?

Chapter Summary

The Emperor's clothes are stuffy, mine however are divine darling.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the splendiforous Stella.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

ANTHONY OF ASGARD

Chapter 23 - Is there a problem?

“Hot damn, is he styling or what?” Tony asked admiringly as his god positively glided through the crowd, making eye contact here and there and nodding regally.

“Anthony Stark, that is not proper garb for an Odinson.” Thor said admonished in an undertone.
“Where did he get such--”

“A great outfit? I gave it to him.” Tony volunteered, rocking excitedly in place. Completely ignoring that incoherent noise thing that Odin was doing, Tony blithely continued, “And who gives a fuck what a bunch of stupid sword slingers think? As for it being improper garb for an Odinson, no worries there big guy, according to the contracts, he’s already a Stark and we Starks do what we want.”

“That is indeed my brother’s saying as well,” Thor sighed tiredly.

“Yeah? Well, it was also mine long before I met him.”

Loki’s flanking Vanaheim guards flowed through the crowd and into the receiving hall with a lot more style and precision that Tony would have credited them for. What with them being real guards and not the ceremonial type and all. *Perhaps the people from Queen Frigga’s land were just more graceful than your average Asgardian?* But whatever the reason, between the way they moved and the matching surcoats and mantles that made their outfits look coordinated even though each one’s armor was different, it did make for a hell of a procession. Which, of course, it would be with his god being the absolute center of attention as he sailed through the crowd, down the hall, and finally coming to a stop in front of Odin.

“All Father, your Majesty.” Loki greeted his not-parents and then dropped gracefully to one knee spreading his hands out with his palms up. And held them there, very definitely not placing a fist over his heart.

Okay. Tony could see that not a single one of the three was happy with Loki’s greeting. He spared a glance and a weak smile at Pepper as she slid in behind him.

“Loki, such garments are not worn in Asgard, and certainly not at state functions.” Odin rumbled, muscles jumping in his jaw as he doubtless held back several other things he wanted to say.

“Of course they are,” Loki replied pleasantly raising his head up and serenely meeting Odin’s gaze. “Where do you think Stark first saw them?”

“He did not see it on a proper Æsir,” Odin ground out.

“Ah. Well then perhaps it is good that I’m a Stark now since I never was a proper Æsir.” Glancing at Tony, Loki’s wicked good smile morphed into an expression so innocent, so sweet and so adoring that Tony was torn between melting into a gooey mess of ‘gotta-have-that lust’ and laughing hysterically at how Odin’s scowling was just rolling off his god’s perfectly tailored back.

Fortunately, Asgardian formal wear doubled as light weight body armor as Pepper had slid in behind Tony, and discretely punched him in the kidney hard enough that the laugh getting ready to bubble up out of him instead turned into an actual cough. “He has a dungeon, Tony,” Pepper hissed in his ear, “If he would stick his own kid down there, he would absolutely have no qualms about stuffing you down there if you make him mad.” She paused a moment and added, “Madder.”

Tony turned his head so he could whisper back, “That was quite an entrance you two made.”

Pepper just huffed out a long suffering breath.

“See, I’m not the only one who doubles down when they’re feeling pissy.” He teased.

“So I see. And can I just say right now how comforting a thought it is to know the both of you are on the same page when it comes to antagonizing powerful people.”

“Well, you were pushing for us to find things we had in common and do them together.”

“Don’t remind me.” Pepper hissed, poking him hard in the side.

Fortunately, before Pep could assault him any further, the queen motioned Loki to his place.

Tony leaned towards Loki and whispered, “I wouldn’t think Pepper had anything in her makeup bag that would suit your coloring there Dasher.”

“She didn’t, but while it will take a while for my powers to become accustomed to the pitifully low levels the energy this body allows, there was enough to shift her enhancements to a shade more pleasing to me.”

“And shift them back?”

“Certainly not, I’ll still have need of them in the weeks to come. I told her to have Jarvis order her new ones and charge them to my account.”

They had just enough time to share a grin before Odin cleared his throat meaningfully and Loki had

to turn his attention towards him.

“Problem?” Loki asked politely, lacing his fingers together in front of him, not incidentally drawing attention to the numerous rings that now adorned them. Who knows where the hell he had gotten them from.

“Yes, there *is* a problem. You looking like a be dammed elf instead of a proper Æsir.”

“Well, I’m not, am I? A proper one that is. Anyhow, I’ve always liked their fashions.”

“Loki--”

“If you don’t like this outfit, I suppose I could accommodate you by changing into something more fitting. Jotun ceremonial garb, perhaps? Unlike most of the bandy legged oafs you rule, my legs are good enough to carry off wearing their style of dress. Or rather, undress.” His lips curled, “Stark wouldn’t mind, I’m sure. And I imagine even my limited magic would be able to conjure this outfit into a suitably ornate kilt.”

Tony’s brain stuttered to a halt. With his hair done up and makeup, Loki was more beautiful than a guy should be. Loki with his hair, makeup and wearing slim cut silks that accentuated his long lean body rather than layers of leather topped with armor was hotter than any guy should ever be. Eyes wide, Tony turned his head and looked his god up and down. Loki standing there wearing nothing but a kilt? Fuck, No, he wouldn’t care one bit.

His mind, of course, obligingly tossed up one gorgeous mental image, which he lost himself in for a long moment until he noticed the background of that image.

Oh hell no.

Yeah, so he could also imagine numerous Asgardian hens, and even a few sword slingers also checking out his god. Totally not going to happen. *But later? In private?* Tony made a mental note to find out exactly what a Jotun kilt looked like. Just in case his god someday wanted to lounge around in something a bit cooler in Malibu. Now, *that* was a private image he could definitely dwell on.

“Stop it, both of you,” Frigga hissed at Odin and Loki, glaring a moment before she nodded to some functionary to get the honored guests moving towards the royal family before a war of some sort broke out.

“I am not unaware that you are doing this to be deliberately provoking, you insolent child.” Odin whispered harshly out of the side of his mouth while watching the approaching crowd with an air of benevolence.

“As you were when you pledged my money to a Midgardian charity.” Loki retorted, also looking at crowd moving down the hall and not at Odin.

His own game face firmly in place, Tony slid a hand down the inside of Loki’s arm into his palm, tugging until the younger god let go of his other hand and instead laced their fingers together.

“How so? You once told me you wanted to be a benevolent god to Midgard. This will be your opportunity. And having shared in their pain from the invasion, you will have the chance to apply monetary balm to their small pains and comfort them with your silver tongued condolences. When you are done, they will no doubt welcome you with open arms as a representative of Asgard... And not try to murder you out of hand.”

Startled, Loki turned to argue with his not-father, “Well, it’s not like I remember that conversa--”

Tony pulled sharply on their joined hands. Irritated, Loki glanced at him so Tony raised his brows in his best, ‘*don’t start no shit*’ look, and pointed with his chin towards the rapidly approaching herd of important people.

Loki huffed, but promptly straightened up in preparation to meet their guests. Only Tony knew about the minuscule shiver that ran through him as the first guest drew near.

OoooO

Letting go of Tony’s hand, Loki had greeted and guided Tony through greeting various high ranking dignitaries from other realms. A few of the guests exchanged nods with Thor in the back row, but apparently he was there solely as Loki’s shield man, or best man, or whatever the hell he was supposed to be, so none of the guests spoke to Thor directly.

Tony had been listening to some high Vanir Lady Something-or-other drone on about how adorable Loki had been as a child when his god deftly interrupted, diplomatically shooed her on her way, and introduced Tony to the next person in line, who turned out to be that Elric of Melniboné guy again. Okay, so actually his name was Lord Alfild, Earl of Aubec, Chief Advisor to King Frey of Álfheimr. Apparently, the Friend With Benefits title was either not spoken of in polite company, or so understood it was not in need of repeating, not that Tony cared about that.

However, what Tony did care about was the fact the Elric had apparently pulled out all the stops for this...

What do you call what we are doing here? As Tony riffled through his mental file, trying to decide which word describing today was the least lame, he decided to hell with it. Tony was tired of beating around the bush and was just going to call it what it was.

Fine. Elf guy had pulled out all the stops for this *Wedding*. And yes, he was looking too cool for you, with his long white hair studded with sparkling silver and rubies that matched his eyes, wearing a close fitted pale silver filigree long jacket, white slacks and knee high boots. And a bewitching smile that deepened at the tiny noise Pepper made when he inclined his head towards her. But as much effort as Elric had put into his appearance, Tony was happy to see that Loki’s more striking raven wing black hair and brilliant green eyes totally eclipsed him, appearance wise.

At least, in Tony’s opinion. Which honestly was the only one that mattered as far as he was concerned.

OoooO

“When are Pepper and Dale going to be rotated to our table?” Tony asked Loki as Rodney, his wife Denise and Happy were leaving to go back to their own table. Apparently, ‘not yet’ was the answer. Three people being seated were introduced as two friends of Loki’s whom he used to stay with when he visited Vanaheim and some chick he used to take magic lessons with. Which, after the first few minutes of polite chit-chat with the spouse, him, they turned their attention to Loki and left him alone.

The main event had started out with them being introduced to the crowd that didn’t merit a personal chat in the receiving hall, and then everyone from the receiving line viewed the contracts. Although, Thor, Eir, Pepper and Odin’s Lawyer did nothing more than glance at the documents

before passing them onto their principals. Then Frigga, Odin, Loki and Tony in turn swore that all items listed had been complied with and they agreed to uphold said contract.

Afterwards, they sat down to dine at a table with even more gold than the last time. Tony personally thought the jeweled cups and flatware were a bit overkill, but he guessed all that plunder and tribute accumulated over the centuries had to be used somehow. The only difference he could tell between this dinner and the last, was that of the six people being rotated in and out, the three sitting in front of Odin, Thor and Jane were official visitors, whereas the ones in front of him, Loki and Frigga were more personal friends. Well, and that the visits were a lot shorter than last time, only lasting about twenty minutes before Functionary One ushered them away and the dining staff swooped in with well-practiced moves to set up for the crew being ushered over by Functionary Two.

“Hey Tony, Hey Loki.” Darcy said, plonking down in front of Loki after being introduced, despite Two’s attempt to seat her in front of Frigga. Steve and Bruce looked at each other a moment, before Steve good naturedly left the seat in front of Tony for Bruce.

“Brucie baby,” Tony sang, pointing a bedazzled fork at him, “I have soooooo been wanting to *chat* with you.”

“Yeah. I know. Pepper warned me. She also told me to tell you not now or she’s going to have all your coffee machines stocked with herbal tea.”

Tony’s eyes narrowed. “Not that I don’t think she is capable of such treachery, buddy, but that seems more like a Banner threat than a Potts Threat.”

“Leave it, Stark,” Loki interrupted. “There is no need to badger Doctor Banner. He signed a confidentiality agreement.”

“Whoa! Seriously nice bling you guys have at your table,” Darcy exclaimed, picking up her spoon and examining the handle.” She looked and noticed Frigga watching her with a bemused expression. “I mean, my mom is like all proud of her Grande Baroque sterling set, but that is nothing compared to this.”

“You still could have told *me*,” Tony grumped at Bruce, pouting a bit. “And you.” Tony reached up and gently tweaked one of the dangling emeralds in Loki’s hair, which he had been dying to do for the whole evening. “What’s it going to take for you to quit calling me 'Stark' half the time and actually just call me 'Tony'?”

“I dare say it would take you consistently using my proper name rather than those ridiculous nicknames like Reindeer Games, Rudolf or Bambi.”

“So then, not going to happen, huh?” Tony retorted with a wry smile.

“Most likely not.”

“Awww, Bambi is so cute. I wish I had a cute nickname.”

“You do. Psycho Chick.”

“I said cute, Tony, not insulting.” Dismissing Tony with a twitch of her nose, Darcy turned her attention to Loki. “Anyhow. Loki, I tried to hook up with you when we arrived this morning, but the guards wouldn’t let me onto the floor you were on. You like *seriously* need to talk to them about that. So... We gonna get a chance to chat later, or is this it?” She asked, waving her hand at the table in front of her. “Oh and if don’t chat later, just a heads up, that Sif chick has been totally

dissing the two of you.”

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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***** TRIGGER WARNINGS - Absolutely nothing. Seriously. There is nothing to see here, move along. *****

Shall we mingle?

Chapter Summary

Dinner, deals and delights unfolding? Maybe.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the most wonderful Stella. With less than a twenty-four hours turn-around I might add. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 24 - Shall we mingle?

As far as Tony was concerned this day could not end quick enough. He was sick of smiling at people he didn't know, and sick of feeling Loki tense up every time someone new sat at their table. Dinner had seemed to go on for days rather than the three hours it actually took, and now thank heavens it seemed to be just about over. Not that Tony was an expert on Asgard feasts or anything, but the attendants swooping in to gather everything off the tables was a pretty good indication that the social mingling part of the evening was about to occur.

Another indication that things were winding down was the fact that no one had been seated across from them after the last group has been ushered away. This left Tony absolutely no one to talk to since he was seated at the end of the table with nothing to do but watch his nibs carry on a low toned, pretty much un-eavesdropable conversation-slash-argument with his not-mother. And think.

Not that Tony didn't think all the time... *Hello Genius*. However, he wasn't exactly pondering his next suit upgrade or anything like that, he was thinking about sex. And yes, he also spent a lot of time thinking about that... *Hello Playboy*. But usually, worry and uncertainty were not part of his sexy-time thoughts like it was tonight. He wasn't worried about 'his' performance, he could have wild sex in his sleep. Hell, he had the videos to prove that. But he was worried about which Loki he was going to be going to bed with tonight. Loki as a female was frankly a wild thing. While Tony couldn't say for certain she'd been the craziest ride he'd ever had, he also couldn't say she hadn't been. It was that close.

But Loki as a guy? Oh, he'd been great, and they'd always had a hot time... but his god always stuck to the heavy petting mutual masturbation thing. Not that Tony had ever been aware of it until later the next day. In the moment? While it had been happening? Fuck, he'd been lucky to remember his own name. He just wasn't sure if it was because Loki didn't like topping or being topped so it was something he didn't want to do. Or was it was a cultural taboo thing that he wasn't comfortable breaking, even with Tony? Or was it because of Heimdall, Odin and his ravens?

During the invasion, Thor had mentioned that Loki could only be seen when he allowed it, which is how they knew he was on the QuinnJet, but not what he had done with the Tesseract. Loki without powers was subject to constant surveillance, except for when he had been on earth as a

woman. At that time, no one was looking for him, since he was supposed to be with his mother. Even if they had been looking, no one had a clue he was on earth or what he looked like at the time.

Personally, provisionally? From the differing looks they had been getting tonight, and the research he'd done into Norse customs and the extent to which they were influenced by the Asgardians? Tony was willing to bet most of Loki's restraint as a guy was due to his inability to shield his actions and the Norse rule of '*thou shall not be the catcher*'. Especially with the way Loki was practically braced for the worst every time someone approached them. Tony preferred to hang around with Loki the guy. But Tony wondered if **LokiGuy** was ever going to pull out any of **LokiChick's** tricks?

It was honestly worrying to Tony that his godling, as a woman who wasn't being watched, liked to mix it up in all kinds of ways. Loki obviously had centuries of varied experiences to draw on and seemed quite enthusiastic with getting his kinks on. So how long could Tony keep him happy if they only did it vanilla? For that matter, how long could Tony stay happy that way? He liked to stave off boredom by trotting out his own non-standard inclinations, after all.

While Tony really wanted to understand what was going on in Loki's beautiful head, his more immediate concern was not crossing some Loki-drawn line this evening and inciting his wrath. He had tried in the last few weeks to talk to Loki about it, but Loki had merely glared at him, tossed a quick glance up to the heavens and hissed at him to drop it.

Resting his head against three fingers, Tony looked out at the crowd from under his lowered brow and sighed internally. Hopefully Loki had enough MoJo returned to him that they could have a private chat when they got back to his room this evening.

"Well, I like them." Loki said, finally talking loud enough that Tony could make out what he was saying. He shifted his head enough that he could watch Mother and not-son.

"They are indeed lovely, Loki, I'm only saying that perhaps this evening was not the best time to decide to wear them." Frigga replied, also in a voice that Tony could hear. Apparently, the whispered-slash-hissed part of this evening's conversation was over.

Here we go.

Tony scanned the tables below them, trying '*not*' to look like he was listening in and watching them out of the corner of his eye.

"I beg to disagree, your majesty," Loki said serenely, causing Frigga to flinch while he merely inclined his head in a polite greeting to a guest passing by. "Now is *the* perfect time to dress this way. However, do feel free to talk to the head of my house if you disagree. I doubt if it will do you any good, since he was the one who commissioned these for me. That *is* the accepted protocol for a complaint of this nature, yes?"

Frigga flicked a glance at Tony. He grimaced and gave up all pretense of not paying attention to them. Frigga's lips thinned briefly, she nudged Odin before standing up and signaling to the attendants to open the doors to the gathering hall.

Since Loki made no attempt to move on to the social part of the gathering yet, Tony was content to sit there while the royal family and most of the diners filed into the other room.

Idly wondering how long they would have to mingle before they could go back to Tony's room, negotiate this evening's boundaries, and then hopefully fuck like bunnies, Tony watched the

dispersing crowd. There were quite a few puzzled looks aimed at them, a good number of derisive glances and a sprinkling of flat out vicious stares. One of which was coming from that Xena chick who hung with Thor's posse. Just to piss her off, Tony gave her a toothy grin and a big thumbs up. Her outraged expression amused him to no end until she spun on her heel and went into the next hall. Tony decided he would have to look her up before the evening was over and wind her up a bit more. Glancing over, he noticed the big smile on Loki's face and felt a thrill of enjoyment racing down his spine. Double teaming the High Priestess of PMS? Hell yeah, Tony could get into that. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" He asked reaching over to curl his hand into Loki's.

"If you are thinking of ways to make Odin All Father rue the day he decided to oppress me, then yes." Loki replied absently, before giving himself a small shake and turning to face Tony.

Okay, so not what Tony was thinking. Still. It sounded interesting in a *'I'm so bored I would pull on a fire alarm if I knew what one looked like here'* kinda way. He scooted closer and placed a chin on the god's shoulder, just in case maybe Loki wanted to bend down and kiss him. Because, that? Tony could be totally into that. Thinking about Odin ass-father tonight? That he was not so much into thinking about. "Uh huh. So... Any of these ideas going to involve any armies?"

"Honestly, Stark, there are other ways to overcome your foes than brute force, which is something they excel in and are prepared for, so why take that route?"

Tony took a deep breath, despite the lingering odor of roast wildebeest or whatever the hell he'd been served; he could just faintly get a whiff of winter rain. There was nothing more in the world, or the Nine Realms even, that Tony wanted more than to just than to bury his nose in Loki's hair and breathe that in for the rest of the night.

"Are you falling asleep, Tony?" Asked his godling in a concerned tone.

"What?" Tony hastily opened his eyes. "No. No. I'm good. So. These plans of yours? No mass slaughter?"

"No."

"Entire realms being blown up?" He asked searchingly. "Just curious."

Rolling his eyes, Loki said dryly, "No, Stark. No realms will be destroyed."

"Oh." Tony thought a moment, calculated the very short odds that the entire situation could go pear shaped, but decided WTF. "Well then, I could be up for helping. Count me in."

Letting his head drop against the high back of his chair, Loki let loose a small rueful chuckle, before rolling his head a bit to the side so he could look at Tony out of the corner of his eye. "Why?"

"Hey. I told you. Nobody messes with my stuff."

Loki gifted him with a smile, Tony was delighted to see that it was the boyish one that only occasionally peeked out. "It could go very wrong you know."

"Pfft. We're smart guys, we'll think of something it does. Now gimme a kiss and let's go fuck with the Warrior Princess."

A flickering glance around the room showed it to be almost entirely empty of guests, with just a few servants running back and forth, who were definitely not paying any attention to them. Pushing his chair back from the table, Loki turned towards him, hooking a slender hand delicately around

one of his chest armor straps and pulling Tony towards him. Concentrating hard on the approaching sensation, Tony felt his eyes drift shut. He could hear the slight chime of Loki's jewels as his hair swung forward a bit, releasing the sharp, crisp, Niagara-Falls-in-winter smell that was Loki. Tony felt the barest brush against his lips and felt the tiniest tug on his lower lip before Loki pulled away with a little brush of his fingers against Tony's neck.

"That's all you're getting right now, Stark, so you might as well open your eyes."

Scrunching up his face in displeasure, Tony huffed, "You are a cruel, cruel god. You know that, right?"

Disgruntled, Tony finally opened his eyes and looked into the amused green ones across from him.

"So I have been informed."

"You sss..." Pausing a moment, Tony flicked his lip with his tongue, not nervously, mind you, because Tony doesn't do nervous, but just to help himself think. "I know it's a bit late to ask..." He waved his hand in a vague circle. "But are you okay with this?" Loki stilled, watching him closely for a very long moment before he blinked. And then, his god held that look for another long moment until Tony felt the first stirrings of uneasiness.

And then, Loki waited just a bit longer before his face crinkled up in amusement.

"In truth, Stark?" Loki asked wryly with a lopsided smile. "I find you easy to converse with and intelligent enough not to annoy me, and yes, I have been very fond of you for a long time. Well, long as you measure time that is," Loki pushed back his chair, looking away for the barest instant. "Except, of course, when you act like an unthinking, hurtful ass."

Saw that one coming, Tony thought ruefully.

"Well, of course. That goes without saying." Tony agreed. *Including you too jerk.*

"So don't give me cause to ever say it again."

Saw that one too. "Now that I can't promise you. But I'll try not to. Okay?"

Slumping back in his chair and shaking his head, Loki looked fondly at Tony, "I suppose that is the best I can hope for from you, isn't it?" Rueful amusement evident in his voice.

They sat there for a quiet moment, frankly basking in the lack of strife between them. Until of course it became too much for Tony. He did have a limited tolerance for being quiet. "So." He rubbed his hands together with his best evil chuckle, "Let's go say hi to a few people, make Siffy's life a living hell at least for tonight and then sneak off to bed."

"While I am, of course, always game for anything that annoys *Siffy*, may I ask why you are so insistent upon doing this?"

"She looked at me funny."

"Oh." One eyebrow arched.

"And Darcy said she was bad mouthing us."

Loki looked thoughtful for a moment and then stood, motioning Tony to join him. "Well, that

seems to me an entirely rational reason for possibly inciting a brawl at an official court function. Let us indeed go find Sif.”

OoooO

Tony was a man on a mission. However, with the crowd swirling around visiting each other and Asgardians being as generally bigger than Tony, he was indeed fortunate to be a man on a mission with a really tall partner. It didn't take Loki too long to find the Treasonous Twits, minus the Tank with Braids, who was probably hanging out with his wife somewhere. Or looking for a snack. After all, it had been a good thirty minutes since dinner ended.

What did take time was getting past all the people who wanted to talk to them. Not that Tony minded being introduced to the High Priestess of Álfheimr. Ivaldi Something-he-couldn't-pronounce was a tall regal woman who looked like a well preserved great grandmother. Which he supposed in reality meant she had been around since the last ice age. She and Loki obviously got along well and his god relaxed enough to spend an enjoyable few minutes talking smack about many of the other attendees.

Those other attendees Tony had not enjoyed being introduced to. Oh, the ones that stopped them had mouthed politely worded congratulations, but a good number of them also sported barely concealed smirks that caused Loki to draw himself up haughtily. And then, there were the ones who hadn't tried to talk with them, but chatted amongst themselves just loud enough that a few words could be heard here and there before they abruptly stopped as Loki drew near. Loki didn't twitch an eyelash, but his shoulders did become almost impossibly square and Tony was pretty sure he was making a careful record of all the people he would need to payback in the future.

Good, I'll help, Tony thought with no small amount of petty spitefulness.

Granted, the majority of the room wasn't doing much of anything besides furtively watching them, speculating what outrageous thing their apparently volatile younger prince and his odd Midgardian might do next. And, of course, drinking heavily. They were Asgardians, after all. This did not help Loki's temper one bit, since their voices rose as their inhibitions dissolved.

By the time they were free to continue on their way, neither of them was in the best of moods. Years of experience in dealing with a hostile board helped Tony keep his party-hardy face firmly in place and Loki got that pissy, abstractedly amused look he always got right before he exploded. It was enough to drive Tony to drink, or it would have been if said drink wasn't wafting past him on a tray not requiring him to even find a car. Grabbing a goblet of who knows what, Tony took a deep drink, he was going to need all mellow buzz he could get if he had to put up another hour or so of these assholes.

“Blast.” Loki growled under his breath, grabbing Tony's arm and pivoting them in another direction so fast, Tony almost ran into some guy behind them.

“What's wrong?” Tony craned his head over his shoulder while trying to keep the rest of his drink from sloshing due to the abrupt change of direction.

“Sif is leaving.”

“Aw man, that sucks.” Tony whined, he had really been looking forward to screwing with her.

“Why?”

“Thor and Jane are headed towards them.”

Well that would explain why he wasn't even going to get to screw with Dick Dashing. Tony knew that as much as Sif was avoiding Jane's company, more so was Loki taking pains to avoid his not-brother whenever possible. "Well, there goes all our fun." Tony grouched, tugging on Loki so he would pause long enough for Tony to hand his now empty goblet to a passing servant. Loki huffed irritably in agreement.

Taking in the crowd around them, Loki glanced sideways at Tony, "I don't know about you, Stark, but I think I have mingled as much as I care to this evening. Certainly not as long as *'their majesties'* would like, but enough." Loki said, trying to keep his growing irritation in check.

Really? Hell Yeah! Tony's face split into a wide grin, "Lo, that is the best news I've had *all day.* *All week* even. I would *looooooove* to leave now."

Tony could feel tears of happiness welling up within him, okay so maybe not tears but other things were definitely getting ready to well.

Letting loose a dignified snort, Loki turned to the guy Tony had almost run into earlier and said, "We're leaving now." And it was only when that guy touched the communicator in his ear that Tony recognized him as one of Loki's guards. He really, really had to learn who they all were. He almost pulled out his phone and to make a note for Jarvis to make him flashcards or a match game or something when it struck him what was about to happen.

They were officially leaving. Now even. Tony felt a warm spiral of warmth rising within him. They *'had'* to do that consummation thing. And it had to be done. Tonight . No if's, and's, or 'I have a headache's were allowed. And Loki was even onboard with the idea. Sort of. Pretty much. Enough.

It was all Tony could do not to grab Loki's hand and make a dash for the door.

Deftly deflecting several attempts to engage them in conversations, Loki steered them through the crowd. Tony could see the door just a few yards ahead, and then it was just a short walk... Okay. Then, it was just a hell of a long walk to the family wing, and they could shut the guards out of their room and be alone. And for the first time since Tony had been stupid, he was going to be in close quarters with his god with nothing but a thin layer of sweat between them. Crowding Loki to wordlessly urge him to hurry, they were almost to the door when he heard Fury calling them.

Jesus Christ on a Pogo Stick. Now what?

Barreling down on them as fast as the crowds would allow, with Natasha in tow was his second favorite one eyed man. Although, to be honest Odin being on the top of Tony's personal shit list was a recent occurrence. Fury had to stop several feet away from them due to the two of Loki's personal guards stepping into his path to stop him.

Taking advantage of Fury's lack of momentum, Tony pushed Loki towards the door.

"Stark!"

"Not now Nicky, I'm busy, or rather about to get busy."

"I need to talk to you two, *now.*"

Seriously? After what Tony has gone through for the last two years, Fury was trying to cock block him? What the hell. "Fuck no. Not now, Nick, besides, I'm not talking to you." Frowning, Loki looked at the director. "No. No. No," Tony whined and it was all he could do to keep from stomping his feet like a tired child. "Come on, Rudolf, we have better things to do. Lots of better

things to do than talking to Cyclops. You have no idea how many better things I want to do with you.”

“It wasn’t us; it was the Governor from Kansas.”

Huh?

“Don’t be ridiculous,” Tony snapped, now not only annoyed because he was being cockblocked but also because Fury was trying to feed them some cock and bull story. “Kansas, Nick? Seriously? *That* was the best you can come up with?”

Glowing with his one eye, Fury growled. “Of course. I’m serious. You’re supposedly a genius, aren’t you? Can’t you see this is my serious face?” *It was almost comical as the director of SWORD gestured with his index finger to his own face.*

“Governors don’t have that kind of power.”

“If you paid any attention to politics, Star--”

“That’s Pepper’s job.”

“Well then, as Ms. Potts should know, governors do have this kind of power when they are the front runner of their party in next year’s presidential elections. Not to mention their family connections to the fifth largest privately owned business in the country. And if they decided to slip it in to embarrass the incumbent party, which coincidentally is the party that allowed Mister Wizard there to stay in your tower in the first place. Next year is an election year, no one wanted to go on record opposing that deal. Not because they necessary thought he was right, but because... Well, it doesn’t really matter, does it?” Fury sighed. “Look, do you mind if we talk for just a minute? I think I might have a deal you’d be interested in.”

“Let him through,” Loki told the guards.

Nick’s attempting to make a deal with a pissed off Trickster god crashed and burned like an Amazon Delivery Drone in a wind storm. First, Loki had taken exception to Fury using his Tony’s first name rather than his new title, then in a move that kinda let Tony know what kind of night he was in for, Reindeer Games had taken exception to Fury telling Tony to shut up because he wasn’t talking to Tony.

Loki drew himself, glaring down his nose at Fury he hissed venomously, “How dare you talk to the head of my house that disrespectfully? How dare you raise your voice to Prinsgemal Stark?”

“Yeah, Nick. Bad form, that.” Tony chimed in gleefully.

“Who the fuck do you think you are, Stark? McGonagall?”

“Naw, If anyone, I am totally Flitwick, Ravenclaw, you know.”

“Humf. Well, you’re the right height at any rate.”

Ouch!

“If you are finished insulting the Prince Consort of Asgard, Director Fury?” Loki asked; bitter black ice frosting every word.

“Yes. Fine. Please continue your Highness.”

“Director Fury, your offer to ‘make this go away’ in exchange for my assistance in setting up a scientific exchange program is ludicrous. Ignoring of course the fact that Midgard has no knowledge we want to exchange. There is no way that Odin would ever allow any Midgardians to study here. There is no force, argument or scheme that I could even recommend to you if I wanted to, which I don’t. I wonder if perhaps you aren’t getting a bit feeble minded in your old age to even broach this topic to me?” Eyes narrowing shrewdly, Loki continued. “Or desperate? If ever the All Father did allow such an exchange of knowledge, there is also no way I would advocate to Odin King, or even Thor, that only SWORD approved scientists be allowed to attend. And finally, it is not within the power of anyone on Midgard to circumvent the decision that was made by the All Father concerning my property there. He would not allow it.” Loki gave a low rueful chuckle, before saying flatly, “Had your petty little governor not pushed for this, I am quite sure it would have happened anyhow. Apparently, the All Father has plans.”

“Look, this caught me by surprise as much as it did you, but I’m telling you I can make this go away. With the right incentive of course.” There was an undercurrent of desperation in his voice that Tony did not normally associate with the head of SWORD.

That statement was highly suspect as far as Tony was concerned. The being caught by surprise part that is. The making things go away, Tony had to grudgingly admit that Fury was pretty good at that.

“You would have been better to have stopped it beforehand Director, then you might have had something to bargain with. Now it is too late.” Despite his earlier angst, Tony could tell that Loki was too in the moment not to enjoy Fury’s growing irritation, his smile was very curly and mischievous and whatever thoughts he was keeping to himself, obviously pleased him.

“Director, I am not totally unmoved by your desire to drink from a much deeper cup of knowledge than Midgard possesses. Nerthus?” Loki waved a hand and one of his guards stepped forward. “After Prinsgemal Stark and I retire, Nerthus here shall return to take you and Lady Romanoff to our scholar’s district. Everything is closed for the evening of course, but since you will never see the inside of it, the least I can do is offer you a close up look at the outside.” Grabbing Tony’s arm, he spun them both towards the hall, calling out over his shoulders, “It’s the large floating building in the center of the campus, you might want to take pictures.”

OoooO

Loki’s snarky good mood lasted until they made it into the room Tony had been assigned. The Vanir guard standing outside the door hurriedly opened the door; Loki sailed in and then stopped so suddenly that Tony almost ran into him. At some time during the festivities, they had acquired staff who fully intended to get them ready for bed. One was a middle aged looking matronly lady and the other her ash blonde maid in training understudy, who looked to be about twenty. However Tony suspected she was most likely just a few years younger than Loki.

Tony cocked a skeptical eye brow at them, “Not that I don’t appreciate the thought, but I have been getting myself ready for bed for years an--”

“It’s a tradition, Stark; we have to be prepared for bed. Come on then,” Loki huffed, motioning them to follow him into the dressing room, where he just stood with arms slightly outstretched as the senior maid began pulling off his jacket.

Rolling his eyes, Tony let the younger maid start unbuckling him. Since Loki’s outfit wasn’t covered with strapped on pieces of armor and bondage buckles like Tony’s was, he was able to skin out of his outfit in just a few minutes. After sending his maid to go ‘ready’ their chamber, Loki disappeared into the bathroom, leaving Tony to reflect that the only thing more tedious than

getting into Asgardian garb, was getting out of it. And trying not to get an inappropriate boner while someone was kneeling at your feet unbuckling your... Whatever the hell she was unbuckling. Of course, it didn't help that his stupid hind brain was currently fixated on the fact that object of his present obsession had just sashayed out of the room wearing nothing but a pair of whisper thin silky briefs. And was currently splashing around in the bathroom, having most likely shucked even that white wisp of material.

"What?" Tony didn't yelp, not really, but he was a bit startled. Okay, so maybe he had lost track of what was going on with Maid Marian and was kind of surprised to find out that he was only a buttery soft pair of leather slacks away from being stripped down to his own Swiss cotton boxers, but still. Apparently, Marian wasn't taking no for an answer even though he assured her that he was capable of taking off his own trousers. *Hello*, been doing it since he was four. Oh no. The leather needed to be properly hung before she could assist him into the bath.

"What is this? The Asgardian version of '*Coming to America*'? Fine, take the pants but don't you dare follow me into the bathroom." Tony said firmly, allowing her to peel his pants off of him. "You know what? Go find Hazel and see if she has anything else she wants you to do. Go. Shoo." Tony gathered his dignity around him like the robe he wasn't wearing and fled into the bathroom.

Taking the hint from the stuff laid out on the edge of the bath, Tony took a quick dip. He did think the white flowers floating in water were a bit over kill, but this was after all most likely one of the few times that your average Lady Space Viking got to show her sword swinging menfolk exactly what a romantic evening should look like. And they did smell nice. Kinda citrusy.

OoooO

Honestly. The flowers in the tub and the silky kimono-like robe should have been a hint.

His bedroom looked like a florist shop had exploded in it. Masses of flowers graced just about every surface you could think of. Tables, light sconces, mantel, the head of the bed? Yes, the insane pansy pusher of Asgard had visited them all. There were more of those white Orange blossomy things that had been floating in the bath, masses of red and white roses mixed in with what looked like holly and... Acorns? Why acorns?

Not important Tony, forget it.

And in the middle of all that floral insanity, seated in an aggressively casual manner, was Tony's own sweet, adorable, raven headed psychopath. Flanked by Hazel and Maid Marion, each holding gold rimmed sherry glasses, filled with a honey colored liquid.

"Don't just stand there with your mouth hanging open, Stark." Loki said testily, rising to his feet. He waved Marion over towards Tony and took the glass Hazel was holding.

"Uh. Thanks?" Tony said, accepting the glass and walking towards Loki. Tony took a sniff, honey, apples, just a bit of a citrus, cinnamon and something spicy he couldn't identify. "Not that I ever object to anyone giving me alcohol, but what exactly is this?" After all, it wasn't like his suite didn't have a compact, but fully stocked bar tucked into the dining area.

"What it is, is tradition, now drink it!" Loki snapped tossing his glass back, draining it and positively thrusting it back at Hazel. Who accepted Loki's glass without acknowledging his bad mood by even a flicker of an eyelash.

Ah. Traditions. There was nothing more guaranteed to get his cutely scowling God of Brattiness going quicker than mindless Asgardian traditions. And apparently, slightly too sweet, spicy apple liquors. It wasn't bad, just nothing he would want to—

Eyes watering slightly Tony handed his glass off to the waiting maid, who with her partner bobbed a curtsy before they left. Not that he had any attention to spare for them distracted as he was by the warmth that immediately started curling up from his belly.

Breathing in, Tony's sinus' started to tingle as a light headed, hazy feeling made its way to his brain. He was willing to bet that he would be tasting apple and spices for hours. "What the hell was that--"

What the drink was, Tony didn't get a chance to find out. Not that he really minded as Loki chivied him back towards the bed, pulling Tony's grey robe down off of his shoulders while quick fingers undid the tie and a slight green haze danced in front of his eyes. "We are going to talk, Stark," Loki breathed in his ear while pushing his boxers down around his ankles. "I've enough power to mask our conversation while this mist covers us."

Okay. Although, if Loki really wanted to hold a conversation with him, he probably should not be laying practically nude on top of him while he pushes Tony towards the center of the bed. Just saying. And for the record, he was right.

These furs feel fucking wonderful on my bare ass.

Somehow, strange noises were made. Tony's not sure how it happened but if he gets called on it, he's going to blame it on that damn apple mead. Tony Stark should not whine like a little girl just because Loki pulled back from the wonderful things his mouth had been doing to the side of Tony's neck. The whine turned to a happier sound when a long shapely leg slung over him and Tony suddenly found he had a raven haired god straddling him. A curiously flushed god? What the hell had been in that mead? Loki's normally pale complexion was tinged a light rose color that went all the way down the slice of chest that wasn't hidden by his robe.

I wonder how much further it goes? Somewhat distracted by the drink induced warmth currently running through his own body and from the hottie currently settled across his thighs, Tony set to work on the silky, slippery, easily undone robe sash. He had just got it undone, and had only a tantalizing glimpse of blush colored abs and belly, when Loki tugged on his hair so he was looking up at his god.

"This is what is going to happen, Stark," Loki letting go of his hair and settling back. "Before I allow you to fuck me, I am going to hold you down and fuck you until you can't remember your own name." Tony's cock twitched happily, the rest of him was pretty pleased too.

Running his left hand down Loki's side, Tony ended up gently kneading a finely muscled thigh. "So you like to top? I can go with that onc--"

"Do shut up, Stark." His obviously irritated god hissed, a flicker of annoyance fliting across his features. "When we are done, I am going to shift into my female form and you can have your wicked way with me." Green eyes flashing he glared down at Tony, "Keeping in mind that we '*do*' have an audience."

Okay, so that was a bit of a drag, but honestly? He knew that once Loki started working his lips and hands all over him, Tony wouldn't care if they let in half the people at the people from the banquet to watch, but still...

“So anything we can do about that in the future?” Tony ran an appreciative palm down his god’s abdomen, chasing the shivers his touch caused. He shot Loki a glance. “I mean, I can get into exhibitionism, but I do like a bit of privacy before getting my serious kink on.”

Frowning, Loki’s long fingers splayed across Tony’s chest, tapping rapidly while the god thought for a moment. “I hope so,” he said tightly, worrying his lower lip while his fingers continued to drum almost absently on Tony’s skin. “...I can think of a few spells that might work, but they will take time to adjust, and honestly, more strength than I have right now.”

“Okayyyyy.” Tony studied Loki’s tightly controlled expression carefully before saying, “I wondered if maybe you didn’t like that kind of stuff. As a guy, I mean.” Wrinkling his nose, he took a chance at lightening his god’s mood and leered up with twinkling eyes, “I *‘know’* you liked it just fine as a female.” With a disbelieving huff, Loki dropped his forehead down on Tony’s chest. And didn’t the new angle of Loki’s body cause a lovely pressure? Tony rolled his hips just a bit.

A dark laugh caused the god’s shoulders to shake, before he peered wickedly at Tony from beneath his brows. A nasty smile flowed across his face while firm hands started circling and tweaking Tony’s nipples, perhaps just a bit sharper than was strictly comfortable.

“Oh Stark... I like fucking just fine,” Loki’s dangerously sinister purr sent a thrill though Tony that curled way past his belly. There was just something about the normally formally speaking god saying the word *‘fucking’* ... And when he used that voice? It got all sorts of dirty thoughts bubbling to the surface of Tony’s mind.

“I like it no matter what form I’m in,” Loki continued. “But while I was female, no one knew to watch me. To watch us.” He grew more serious. “I just don’t like doing it with an audience. At least,” he amended, “An audience not of my choosing.” Loki was plainly seething, and Tony couldn’t help but wonder how much worse his mood would have been without the mellowing properties of that drink they’d been given.

“Unfortunately, an audience is pretty much a given this evening. *It’s tradition.*” Loki growled in a low loathing voice, leaving no doubt as to what he thought of this custom.

“Who’s watching? Golden eyes? The birds? Please say it’s not Odin on his peeping tom throne?” Tony asked slowly running his palms up and down Loki’s outer thigh, pausing only to push the god’s robe back a bit more out of his way, his mind shying away from the thought of a peeping Odin.

Loki’s eyes narrowed when Tony had mentioned Odin possibly watching them. “Usually it is one of the senior healers who is skilled in scrying.”

Oh right. Tony had forgotten about that scrying thing. It was no wonder Asgard didn’t have big screen televisions for entertainment; they could get their porn using a silver bowl of water. Running his hands from where he’d been stroking Loki’s thighs, up to the middle of his god’s back, Tony began rubbing soothing circles, trying to calm the increasingly outraged god leaning on his chest.

“But for us, there will probably be a second witness,” Loki spat, sitting up abruptly, eyes bright with anger, his movements becoming sharper. “And as much as I loathe him, I’m praying it’s Heimdall, quite frankly.”

Manfully ignoring the lovely friction that his irritated partner was causing, Tony lowered his brows, worrying his lip a moment as he marshalled his thoughts. And he absolutely did not try to

roll his hips up. “Really?” He queried, struggling to sound concerned rather than aroused. “I would have thought one of those damn birds would be better.”

“They don’t talk, Stark, they *show* Odin what they’ve seen and heard.” Loki said in his best ‘*don’t be so stupid*’ voice.

No shit? “Ah. Okay then, let’s hope for the great golden eyed one then.” *Fuck.* Slipping his hands lower, he squeezed Loki’s ass cheeks before tugging the god further up Tony’s thighs until he was just at the right spot. Moving his hips, his cock well on its way to full attention, Tony rolled it against the silk briefs that Loki had worn under his robe.

“You know, Bambi... I ‘*like*’ angry sex.”

Tony looked up with a suggestive smile, which grew wider as Loki lifted a disbelieving brow.

“Stark, I assure you the mood I am in, if I did what I wanted to do, you wouldn’t like it much.”

Ohhhh is that a challenge? A promise? They both felt Tony’s cock twitch.

“Yeah?” Tony gave him a speculative look. “Well, as horny as I am, I’m telling you I’d be up for damn near anything. So bring it on, big boy.”

Chapter End Notes

I was going to post this Monday, but decided you guys deserved a Valentine pressie. It's not chocolate, but I hope you enjoy it. So.... next chapter. Shall I gloss over what is happening next with a few flowering paragraphs or do you want details? Let me know quick so I can start on it.

Note: Comments will take the place of chocolate if you are so inclined to gift them to me. :D

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* - mentions of Voyeurism, male body parts and rude words. it will allude to Male on Male sex. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.*****

Not all surprises are good ones

Chapter Summary

A boom gets lowered, right out of the gate! Someone gets impatient, someone else get mad. And it kinda goes down hill from there. NSFW

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the most wonderful Stella. With many helpful comments I might add. :D

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 25 - Not all surprises are good ones

The words '*bring it on big boy*' were still hanging in the air when Loki lunged at him. There was a brief flash of green; some snake fast moves by Loki and the next think Tony knew he was wearing a pair of ornate metal hand cuffs that were somehow hooked to the head board with another length of chain. A situation that Tony found more cute that worrisome these days what with his newly received Asgard strength and his extremis enhancements. It would take more than a simple pair of handcuffs to contain him if he decided that he no longer wanted to play along.

"Heh. So I'm thinking getting stuff from your bag of infinite holding is not too power intensive then, huh?"

"Some planes are more easily accessed than others," Loki agreed. "You do know returning my magic was not the only reason the All Father called me this afternoon, don't you?"

Tony's brows knit a moment in thought as he racked his brain for why else Loki would have to meet with Odin. For a moment, he was at a loss until he realized the answer was right in front of him covered by white silky briefs.

"Oh."

"Oh indeed." Loki ran an admiring fingertip along the cuffs restraining Tony and then he smiled and gave the chain a sharp tug to assure himself that it would hold firm. "This is mostly to insure that busy little hands don't wander where they shouldn't," Loki whispered his voice breathy with excitement as he lifted himself across Tony's thighs.

Well, it wasn't like Tony didn't know that restraint did figure large as one of Loki's kinks. Both using and receiving. So he really couldn't say he objected, especially when the god lay down on top of him and would be able to feel Tony's lack of objection start to poke him in the belly.

"Lights down," Loki commanded and the lights dimmed as strong, sure hands slid up and down Tony's sides. Loki's nails scrapped his skin, not breaking it or anything, just letting Tony know

that they could if they wanted to.

While Tony rutted against him as best he could, Loki gently nuzzled against the crook of Tony's neck.

Nudging Tony's head to one side, Loki began kissing him. Soft, insistent kisses that became more forceful, more demanding until Tony just knew he'd be marked come morning. Losing himself to the sensation of small bites on his jaw and hot breaths against his skin, Tony vaguely became aware that the murmurs of satisfaction he'd been hearing had morphed into actual words.

In between the kisses, Loki's voice flowed over Tony like dark silk. "Do you feel it? Do you feel how my body moves with yours? I want you to listen to what you do to me; listen to how my pulse races at the thought of having you. Owing you. Making you mine *forever*. Without even being aware of it, long before you existed, *I have wanted you*." Tony's eyes flew open at that last bit. He looked sideways, but all he could see was a mass of darkness with jewels dimly glinting in the low light as Loki continued whispering into his ears in between soft kisses and tiny sharp bites at his jaw, neck and shoulders.

Unable to see his god's face, Tony stared at the ceiling, taking in the complex patterns worked into the stone ceiling while the sensations caused by Loki's hands and lips encouraged his hips to lift, rhythmically rubbing his hard cock against Loki's silk covered one. Between every few upstrokes, he would grind in a tight circle and be rewarded with a tiny gasp, or a hitch in the litany of desire that his god was pouring in his ears. Tony knew he had a stupid smile on his face, but those times that his silver tongued godling lost track of what he was saying and simply moaned? Tony'd be lying if he said that didn't cause his smile to grow a little wider.

Except for when Tony had interrupted Loki's concentration with a particularly fine hip roll causing them to stutter to a stop, said god's hands had been skillfully running back and forth the length of his torso, a soft touch here, a small tweak there. But now they continued upwards to stroke Tony's arms. Caressing and squeezing until they flowed over the handcuffs, an act which apparently warranted a heavy sigh of contentment and a bit more pressure on Tony's lap before Loki pushed Tony's hands open and laced their fingers together. With quite a few heartfelt moans of his own, Tony's hips were now rocking in sync with his god's.

"Oh, I quite like that, Tony," Loki gasped against Tony's neck after several long moments, by which time, tiny beads of sweat were damping both their hairlines and Tony could feel how much harder they both were. Lifting his head to look down at Tony, the god bit his lower lip in concentration before going into a series of body rolls that had Tony making a several obscene noises of appreciation that did *not* end in whiny mewling. It just sounded similar, that's all.

With amusement gleaming in his dark eyes, Loki bent down and ghosted his lips over Tony's, frustratingly soft phantom kisses and licks that Tony chased unsuccessfully. "I crave the smell of your skin and the taste of your lips," The god whispered, his tongue suddenly darting into Tony's gasping mouth fought for control of their kisses. Not that he had to fight very hard for it at all since Tony was more than willing to give himself up to his god. It was almost too much for Tony, his head was left spinning from the intensity of what he was feeling. Right before he thought he would shatter the god pulled away, also breathing heavily. "Listen to me now, Sweetling." Tony blinked several times trying to focus on Loki's words rather than the glorious sensations racing up and down his spine. "What I want, is to rub my body against you, breathe you in and never let you go." The raw intensity of this last declaration made Tony's own breath hitch, and the fact that Loki had again sealed their lips together for a long deep kiss that seemed to go on for hours, left Tony breathless. There simply wasn't much he could do, except to lie there and accept what his god was gifting. They both gasped for air when Loki at long last released him.

“But now, Sweetling?” The god panted before taking and holding a deep breath. “Right now, I want to take you, completely own you in a way that Asgard will understand, even if you do not.”

“Umm...” Tony’s brain struggled to work through the haze of lust and feelings to actually form words. Coherent sentences escaping him.

“Good?”

Releasing his hands, Loki sat up with a dangerous gleam in his almost entirely lust blown eyes. He slowly licked his lips as if anticipating something delightful, “How good it is depends on how open you are to the experience,” His god smirked, lifting himself off of Tony.

Ignoring his muttered protests, Loki rolled over to sit on the side of the bed skinning quickly out of his briefs. After taking a moment to get his own heart rate under control, he leaned over and rummaged in the top drawer. “And I mean that in every sense of the word,” He tossed Tony a wickedly debauched look very, very reminiscent of his Lyra persona.

“That robe of yours is totally messing with my view.” Tony huffed unhappily, finally coming back to himself. Loki somewhat mimicked his huff as his brows drew together while rummaging through the shallow basket he’d taken from the open drawer.

“What’s wrong,” Tony asked curiously, lifting his head up enough to see that the basket was filled with various bottles, jars and soft cloths. *Huh, a veritable sexy times gift basket.*

“Wedding mead contains a fertility stimulant. And with their low birth rate, condoms are not something normally used by most Æsir.” Basket forgotten on his lap, Loki rubbed his hands over his face, although Tony couldn’t say for sure if it was in exasperation or because he had a need *‘not’* to look at Tony for a minute. “While not necessary to take you...” Loki trailed off pinching the bridge of his nose in irritation. “I am not really happy about completing the consummation without them, knowing how reproductive you Midgardians are and **not** knowing anything about how fertile Jotun- Æsir hybrids might be.”

Awww, and how cute did a worried Loki look? Tony thought, lolling sideways, unable to decide if it was the way his god stuck out his lower lip like a little kid, or the absolutely adorable way he furled his brows. However as precious as it looked... Tony wasn’t entirely sure he wanted to see it much, since it also meant that his god was upset. *Maybe it would be an okay look for tiny problems? Like, "you took the last cherry tart?" Whatever, since it wasn't you took my tart time that meant it was past time to get rid of it.* Tony only wanted to see Loki pouting when he wanted more sex. That he wanted to see a lot.

“Good thing I slipped a few in my robe pocket from home then.” Tony huffed smugly. Loki dropped his hands to the basket in his lap, and looked over towards him with narrowed eyes. Playing for his audience, Tony then stretched proudly with just a hint of a sassy waggle to his hips. “I didn’t want to have to go looking for my favorite brand in a strange place, after all.”

Placing the basket on the nightstand, minus a small vial he tucked into his robe pocket, Loki leaned over and gave Tony a quick kiss on his hip. “And don’t you just like to think you’re the clever one,” He said in amused admiration while leaning over to snatch up Tony’s robe.

“No, think about it, babe,” Tony said with mock haughtiness. “*Genius*, you know.”

Loki fished several packets out of one of the robe pockets, and placed them in the basket for later. He then held up a small tin, also found in Tony’s robe pocket, and examined it before also dropping it in the basket. Lying back down on his side, facing Tony, he asked, “Thrall relaxant,

Stark?" His low tone indicating that he was going to withhold killing Tony, at least until he got an explanation. And it had better be a good one.

"Don't look at me like that," Tony chided, rolling over on his side again so he could lightly nudge his forehead against Loki's. "That's some good shit. Remind me to get Eir to slip me a few extra ones so I can share with Bruce. He loves the stuff. In fact," Unable to get any closer, he curled a leg around Loki's hip and pulled him towards him. Rubbing as wantonly as his restricted movement would allow, he grinned. "We should both totally take a few hits of it. Get a good buzz going."

"Perhaps later," Loki leaned closer and purred into Tony's ear, sending a shiver down his spine before his god pulled the vial out of his pocket and pressed closer. "After I have you in the manner pleasing to me, I will shift into my female form and you can fulfill your required part of this evening exercise, in a manner most pleasing to you."

So... Mortal nip was not off the table tonight then. Good. But apparently, checking out the new goodies was.

Not that Tony was too worried. He knew what it took to make Loki come undone in both genders, and he was confident he could figure out a third. It's not like he was wildly curious to see how this had been done, he lied to himself. *Mildly curious perhaps. Semi interested in purely a scientific manner maybe*, he told himself. But it could wait, because what was already on tonight's menu was also pretty exciting. If only to see how Male Loki really liked to do it.

Tony fought it, but he couldn't keep the huge grin from spreading across his face. How fucking lucky was he? Seriously. How lucky? Jarvis and Tony together would be hard pressed to calculate the odds of Tony finding a partner who ticked so many things off his bucket list. His partner was not only a god but also hot and apparently three different genders. Who else had that huh? He was smart as a whip. And added bonus, he liked whips, or at least spankings. Looked good no matter what he/she/whatever was wearing. And... Okay this one was never for public consumption because it kinda filled a deep, not at all socially acceptable need, but still... Loki was in point of fact Tony's stuff. Like Jarvis, Dummy, Butterfingers and You, except Loki could actually love Tony back. Really love him. The original Jarvis had loved Tony, but he had firstly belonged to Howard. And god knows Pepper had loved him as much as she was able to but in the end, she had belonged to Stark International.

But Loki belonged to *him*. Hell, he even what amounted to ownership papers. Which while wrong on so many levels still meant that Loki was his and the only person he *had* to share Loki with... Was Loki. And Tony could do that because at the end of the day, nothing in the world interfered with his stuff.

"Sweetling?"

Coming back to himself, Tony wondered how much of the warm fuzzy feeling he was experiencing was from his thoughts and how much was from the soft teasing hand that had been dancing up and down his body. Silky hair wafted around him when Loki dipped his head down to plant playful kisses along Tony's lips, jaw and temples.

"Nut huh," Tony told him, tightening his hand when Loki teasingly tried to move away. Tony had been ready this time, and had managed to bend his fingers down enough to snag a jeweled hank of hair.

"That is not how the game is supposed to be played, Stark." His god huffed, but returned to kissing him while trying to rescue his hair from Tony's grasp.

For several long minutes the hand that wasn't working his hair loose from Tony's hold, was stroking soft patterns up and down his body, stopping occasionally to rub a nipple to attention before sweeping lightly down over his lower belly, ghosting oh so close to Tony's twitching length and then dipping in over his inner thigh and then back again. Meanwhile, Loki scattered soft kisses along Tony's brow, temple, neck and jaw slowly working his way back to the corner of Tony's mouth. Opening his eyes again, he wasn't quite sure when he had closed them, Tony watched the various expressions of contented bliss flowing across Loki's features. At least, until he thought he'd freed his hair and Tony laughingly snagged another bit of it.

"Stark." Loki's tone warned of patience being lost in a deep growl as he rolled over on top of him and glared down. Not incidentally putting many more of those lovely baubles within reach, Tony thought smugly.

Tony grinned lazily up. "What happen to Sweetling?" He asked bucking up and rubbing his cock against Loki's thigh.

"What happen to *not your turn*?" His god riposted, seemingly growing a tad irritated at this new change in his plans.

"True enough, ten more kisses and I'll let go. Five if you throw in another lap dance." Tony teased, deciding to get in a little of his own since by his way of thinking, Loki's tiny teasing touches could be considered torture in some countries. Or should be, by his way of thinking.

Loki's lowered brows telegraphed his feelings upon hearing that statement, but he obediently shifted his leg over so he once again straddled Tony and rolled his hips while giving him a deep wet kiss. Their tongues twisting around each other until they were both so breathless that Tony pulled away with a gasp. "Oh, yeah Bambi, four more just like that." Tony could feel Loki's mouth curling in a smile before the god started nip his way along the edge of Tony's goatee and then along his jaw.

"Stark, I want you to let go of my hair, once and for all," Loki whispered, his warm breath and soft lips tickling the shell of Tony's ear.

"No can— *Yaaaggh*!" Tony shrieked as sharp teeth bit down hard on the crook of his neck. And for the record? Instinctively pulling on the hank of hair he had hold of to haul the Piranha God off of him didn't work. It only made Cujo grind his teeth together threateningly.

"Fuck! Fuck! Fuckity-fuck!" Tony yelped struggling against reflex to open his hand and try to untangle his fingers from Loki's hair before his jugular vein was torn out. "I let go! For crying out loud!"

"I! Let! Go!"

Loki chuckled evilly and without letting go entirely, asked in an understandably muffled voice, "Are you going to leave my hair alone, Stark?"

"Yes, I'll leave it alone!"

"Do you swear?"

"Yes, damn it, I swear!"

Sniggering was not something most people did after a certain age... But sniggering was precisely what Tony was hearing as Loki licked and gently kissed Tony's abused neck, his shoulders shaking with laughter.

“Yeah, yeah. Very funny.” Tony grabbed the chain hooking his cuffs to the bed frame and tugged hard on them. “You know, you do that again, I might be tempted to bust out of these cuffs.” Tony used his chin to head butt the black haired god still snickering into his collar bone. His slightly abused and throbbing collar bone thank you.

“Really, Stark?” Loki straightened into a sitting position and shrugged off his robe, throwing it towards the bottom of the bed. He tapped Tony’s chin and said in a voice of fond derision. “I do so wonder sometimes what passes for thought in that pretty little ‘*genius*’ head of yours.” Smugness rolling off him in almost visible waves, Loki rose up on his knees, stretching his hands far above him, a pose that had the god looking like a cat trying to fluff up the ceiling with his claws. *A long lean pedigreed cat*, Tony thought admiringly despite himself, *all stylish and sleek and sadistic*. Which is why Tony was not too surprised when Loki settled back down, this time across his thighs deigning Tony any friction at all on his already leaking cock.

“As if I would go to the trouble of secreting cuffs that weren’t enchanted to take care of that very problem.” Loki crooned. “How little you must think of me... Tony.”

“Oh, so now I’m Tony.” *Filing away yet another reminder that his godling never let any details slide.*

Humming absently in agreement Loki proceeded to run his hands up his own chest.

OoooO

While it was fun on one level, the part of being restrained that Tony really didn’t do well with was having to wait. It wasn’t that Loki didn’t lick him and suck him and roll against him like a cat in heat, because god knows he did. And when the trickster had gleefully squeezed lube in strategic places and then lay flat against him, doing complicated body rolls and hip grinds to spread it out while demanding that Tony worship his mouth. It was all Tony could do not to thrust up so hard he risked knocking his beautiful god off the bed.

The problem was that Loki always worked him up until he was just ready to explode... And then moved onto something else. So yeah, maybe he might have already gotten a bit mouthy about it once or twice. Honestly, when he wasn’t restrained it wasn’t such a problem because he could start doing a little teasing and taunting of his own. But with his hands chained to the top of the bed, Tony wasn’t even able to take himself in hand, so to speak, when it was past time to finish the job. So yeah, he did have to admit he got a bit demanding.

Which flew about as well as the helicarrier with two engines down.

“I see that I shall have to start secreting a few items of a more personal nature in one of my pocket dimensions,” Loki hissed, throwing the sash from Tony’s robe on the bed beside him and pulling his own from the loops of the robe at the bottom of the bed.

“I’m sorry Lo... I’ll be quiet... Promise.” Tony panted still out of breath from Loki stroking both of their cocks together; those long clever fingers had worked him up until he could barely form a coherent thought, only to stop at the absolute last minute. And maybe Tony’s moaning had morphed into what could be construed as the odd complaint or demand. If you were being picky perhaps.

His attempts to placate his angry god might have worked if it wasn’t for his science brain finally putting two and two together and coming up with shit that was bound to get him in trouble. “Wait. You mentioned something about this before; you have more than one pocket dimension right? Ohhhh, can we like have one for all our toys? And lube, so we never have to look—“

“Hey! What are you doing?!”

Silky material encircled Tony’s cock, pulled tight and then was tied off with a bow that tickled his lower abdomen as his cock bobbed and swayed.

Loki roughly grabbed his chin making Tony look at him. Anger sparked in the dark lust blown green eyes that locked on to Tony’s brown ones. “There is only one thing in all the nine realms that I want *more* than to dominate you, watching the heat from my body cause you writhe beneath me while your skin quivers from my every touch,” Loki growled letting go of his chin and flicking a hard finger on the tip of his nose.

Baring his teeth menacingly at Tony, his voice then took on a tone that would have made any true submissive drop to their knees, “And that one thing is for you to *quit* trying to tell me what to do!” Taking advantage of Tony’s shock, Loki flipped him onto his front, straddled his back, grabbed a hank of hair and pulled Tony’s head back as far as it would go. “Now, Stark, since you were so impatient to finish, I am going to take you now, but only I will cum. And since you couldn’t keep your damn mouth shut, I am going to forget about our plan and also take you as a female. And Norns as my witness, I am going to come at least twice in that form before I even think about untying that sash.” Loki bent low and hissed directly in Tony’s ear. “And if you say anything that might even remotely resemble an order, I am going to use the other sash to gag you and go for thirds.”

He abruptly let go of Tony’s hair. “Do. You. Understand.”

Tony could feel the heat from a full body blush overtaking him. On one hand he was kinda mad, but on the other hand he didn’t think Loki could be any hotter if you set him on fire. “Yeah... Yeah, I got it.”

A ringing slap to his right ass cheek caused him to jump and reassess that last thought.

Okay, I stand corrected, maybe adding a bit of that could make a Dom’ing Loki hotter.

“Single syllables only, Stark, you’ll stay out of trouble that way.”

Without waiting for any kind of an answer, Loki fished around on the bed furs a moment.

Holy shit!

Tony jumped as cold lube hit his skin.

Small sniggers were once again present and Tony could feel the recent tension drain out of the godling on his back as fingers lightly stroked across his new tattoo. With a contented little sigh and a twist of his hips, Loki nestled his cock between Tony’s now slippery ass cheeks. He rubbed his hands up Tony’s back and then continued up until he was stretched full length on top of him with their fingers entwined together.

Oh!

Okay, as good as these sable things felt against his ass, they felt better on his balls. Especially when Loki’s hips pressed into him, long deep gliding motions slid Tony’s family jewels back and forth across the furs. Humming contentedly, Loki started, almost suckling, an area under his ear high up on the unbruised side of his neck where it would be impossible to hide. All the while he pressed deeper and harder into the cleft of Tony’s cheeks. And no, Tony was not moaning at every stoke.

Every other one, max.

“I love when you vocalize for me, Stark.” Loki said lazily in a voice like warm syrup. His right hand let go of Tony’s and he half rolled off of him, tugging gently on Tony’s hair so he could pepper the side of his face with kisses, laughing when Tony jumped as more cold lube hit his ass.

And didn’t Tony vocalize a whole lot more as long fingers teased and stroked and gently nudged before Tony managed to slither high enough on the bed that he had enough slack to push back and impale himself several times on a teasing finger, which was withdrawn far too soon for his liking.

He whined.

“Such a greedy Sweetling,” Loki whispered with a kiss to the temple while hooking his foot around Tony’s calf and pulling his legs apart. “More?”

“Fucking yeah.” Tony managed to gasp before he again received a stinging slap on his ass. “Hey! I was just answering your ques--”

"Ahhhh!"

Several more sharp smacks rained down on his stinging cheek. “What part of single syllables does my pretty little genius not understand?” Loki hissed threateningly in his ear. “Now, I ask again. Are you ready for more?”

“Yes,” Tony said through gritted teeth, resolving to play this game to the end and make plans for when it was his turn. Only he wasn’t going to stop Loki from orgasming, instead he was going to make the bastard god cum so many times he passed out from exhaustion. In between gasps while being prepared, he tried to think of the best way to accomplish his payback until Loki started repeatedly nudging and stroking his prostrate.

Oh fuck did that feel good. And yes, he was moaning like a porn star.

The stars bursting behind his eyes left him no attention to spare for anything that wasn’t connected to the shudders running up and down his body and the throbbing of his firmly restricted cock.

Loki’s mouth encircled his ear in a hot and wet heat, chuckling when Tony whined at the loss of his fingers. The playboy was barely aware as Loki positioned himself between Tony’s legs and pushed him forward until he was on his knees, hands pressed against the headboard as high up as the chain would allow him to go. The bottle of lube was tossed back down on the bed as Loki shifted into position right behind him and spread his cheeks. Tony’s breath caught as the blunt head of his god’s cold, slick covered cock pressed slowly into him. Hard hands on his hips kept him from moving away from the pressure, but it stopped for several long moments until he grew used to it.

It had been years since Tony had been on this end of the equation, and while not exactly comfortable, he had to admit he’d been prepped better than he’d ever been before. Loki rotated his hips, minutely working his way in with small back and forth motions until he got to the point where the only thing Tony wanted was for him to be in all the way. Tony pushed back with a long groan that was almost immediately echoed by his god. They were both panting by the time Loki was buried what should have been balls deep inside Tony’s ass.

Loki kneeling between his legs, had draped his body over Tony’s back and was shifting his grip to from the playboy’s hips to his shoulders before he started slowly working himself back and forth. By the time Loki was moving smoothly in and out at a respectable pace, Tony was ready to cum.

By the time he had shifted his hands back to Tony's hips and straightened up, the playboy practically keening at each stroke, sweat covered and more than ready for Loki to cum.

Past ready, really.

Loki randomly started changing the angle of his hips and Tony thought he was going to pass out as his prostrate got nailed every couple of strokes.

Fuck it all, how did he miss that he married the fricken Energizer Bunny?!

"I'm not a rabbit, Stark." Loki panted, hunching over him.

Wonderful, he was babbling random thoughts out loud in addition to making those insane mewling noises.

Loki had to cum; Tony didn't know much more of this he could take. In an instant of clarity he thought of something that might help and he bore down hard and constricting his muscles as much as he could, released them and then did it again.

"Stark!"

Loki shouted, when he did it the first time, but his rhythm faltered when he did it the second time. Moaning, Tony felt warmth filling him as Loki's hips pumped a last few times before the god pressed in as far as he could and stopped.

Over his own harsh breathing, Tony could hear Loki's fast panting. Loki wrapped his arms around the playboy's waist, and he felt the weight of a damp forehead accompanied by an almost musical chiming as Loki's hair and jewelry came to rest on his back for several long moments.

"Oh fuck, Bambi," Tony whined as Loki withdrew and shuffled back a bit.

A shiver ran down his back which felt cold without the contact.

Not able to move yet, Tony felt the hairs on the back of his neck raise for some reason. A moment later someone much lighter than Loki lay across his back, wrapping soft hands around his waist and dragging him over onto his side. They fell in a tangle of limbs and even in his cock distracted state, the playboy couldn't help but notice a whole lot of softness pressing up against his upper back for the briefest moments.

Groaning because he had to move, Tony looked over his shoulder to see what the hell just happened and saw Lyra kneeling on the bed behind him, one hand buried in the furs for support and the other reaching for the basket on the night stand.

"Lyra?"

"Tony?" She mocked mimicking his tone of questioning amazement, both brows raised and her lips twisted in a curly Cheshire like smile.

Cats. It's always cats, Tony thought almost incoherently, letting his head drop back down to be pillowed on his arm, his hips twitching minutely with need. Almost without being conscious of it, Tony allowed himself to be rolled onto his back and scooted back into place on the center of the bed.

He whined halfheartedly as businesslike hands manipulated his balls as if they were trying to guess their weight before soft hands slid a condom over his pulsating cock. "Please, Lo. Please, let me

cum.”

“Of course, Tony. Soon.” Loki promised in Lyra’s voice. Tossing a shapely leg over him, she sat up high on her knees and then guided him into her already slick folds. “Can you feel how ready I already am for you? Lyra whispered, her voice hitching as she began slowly lowering herself on him.

Tony didn’t even wait for her to finish, he thrust up trying to ease the ache in his bound cock.

“Oh!”

Oh yes, Tony thought wildly, finally getting some friction on his cock.

Lyra was bucked forward, falling against Tony’s chest. “You’d better hang on because you are going for a ride,” Tony grunted, his hips firing like an engine piston as hard and as fast as he could go. Gasping at every thrust, Lyra was clinging to him, her arms wrapped around his neck and buried under his chin.

Grabbing on to the chain above his head, Tony pulled on it for leverage, lifted his hips off the mattress and spun them both over. Lyra let out a high pitched squeak that Tony ignored as he scrambled to position himself on top of her, pinning her in place with his body until he could use his spread knees to push on her buttocks, scooting her high enough on the bed that his elbows could block her from easily getting out from under him.

It took a few tries but Lyra was so slick and spread open so wide Tony was finally able to re-seat himself. He figured he’d got it right when she let out a long low moan. He knew he’d got it right when she started rocking back and forth with him. He smiled grimly to himself when he felt how the large knot of silk on the top of his cock kept bumping into her mons. And he laughed out loud when she pressed her hands against the head board and started lifting her hips to meet it with each thrust.

“I am going to ride you like you have never been ridden before,” he growled.

Sweat was pouring off him when Lyra began uttering sharp little cries from where she had her head buried against his chest.

Just as he was sure his heart was going to explode, it happened.

“Starrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrk!”

Lyra wailed, pressing up as hard as she could against him and then going stiff for a long moment.

Cock throbbing painfully in time to his far too rapid heartbeat, did he take a breather? *Hell yeah he did.* Tony waited until she sagged back onto the bed, arms again clinging to his neck as the aftershocks pulsed through her. In fact, despite the urge from his hind brain that he needed friction *now!* He waited until she started nuzzling his neck and planting a few soft post-orgasmic kisses against his throat.

And then, Tony began gently rocking against her. Slowly, gently, he ignored her feeble protests and the breathy demands that he just wait, but was careful not to say anything that might get him in trouble or be construed as an order. Lifting his head up, he found her mouth and begged entry, swallowing any further complaints that it was too soon. It was not too soon; if he didn’t make Lyra come soon and get her to take this damn tie off his cock, Tony was going to lose his ever loving fucking mind.

It wasn't too many minutes until she started rocking in sync with Tony, and only a moment after that when he released her lips so he could get more air.

"More." Lyra moaned into his ear. A demand he would have loved to comply with if he wasn't so damn tired.

"Bambi, I'd love to pound you harder," Tony gasped his arms trembling and almost ready to give out on him. "But I don't think I have any *more*."

"Up." Lyra groaned, pushing feebly against his chest with her hands. "Let me top, Tony."

"I cum as soon as you do?"

"Uh, huh."

"Promise."

"Yes."

The way Tony fell on to his side was not one of his smoother moves, but then neither was there anything graceful about the way Lyra pushed him flat and clambered frantically onto his overly sensitive cock.

Tony hissed as she bottomed out but she didn't even seem to notice as buried her hand within her folds and started rocking her sweat covered body desperately back and forth. When she started chanting "Tony, Tony, Tony," on her down strokes, he figured she was close.

"Loki! You promised!"

For a moment, it didn't seem like he was going to be able to get her attention, but he bucked up hard and reminded as forcefully as he could, "You promised! The tie!"

Fingers fumbling for the ends of the bow, it took a few tries for her to get hold of it. At one point, she grimaced in concentration so hard he thought he missed his chance, but she did at last pull the bow loose, her fingers scrabbling to loosen it.

Tony thrust up, every muscle in his body seizing as Lyra ground down hard several more times, the last time rotating her hips before hissing and falling forward.

Having gotten his wind back while she did all the work, his hips slammed up several more times and then lights exploded behind his eyes, every muscle he had contracted...

Tony screamed.

It was loud. It was long. And it was most definitely a scream.

After being so long denied it hurt like hell when he finally did cum.

Tony was breathless, his heart was trying to pound out of his chest and the may have blacked out for a second. Several minutes later however he was feeling blissfully relaxed and curiously boneless.

When he could spare one moment of concentration for anything but his own aftermath he became aware of a soft plaintive litany of '*My Tony, My Tony*' being mumbled into his collar bone.

A litany that abruptly stopped the moment he stirred.

A few more minutes went by before their heartbeats and breathing had wound down to anything resembling normal. And it was a few minutes longer still before Lyra slid off of him, without meeting his eyes.

Her touch was gentle, but he still had to bite his tongue trying not to yelp when Lyra slowly slid the poppa-stopper off his still sensitive cock. Tying it shut and wrapping it in one of the cloths from the basket; she set it on the night stand. Settling back on the bed, with one leg draped over the side and the other tucked sideways she squared her shoulders, and with a set face she focused on a point of the headboard just above his head.

He was surprised, or not really, that his godling seems to be already fully composed after their *little scuffle*.

"Okay." Tony drawled. "I certainly haven't done that in a while." Lyra's eyes remained focused on the head board. "So. Was that for me? Or our audience?"

Leaning over him, she touched the cuffs in a quick pattern, green eyes at last shifted to meet Tony's, and Lyra regarded him steadily. "That was for *me*, Stark." She said through gritted teeth, giving the cuffs one last nudge so they clicked open.

Without another word, his god rolled off of him and stalked into the bathroom, her bare ass moving in such a mesmerizing way that if it wouldn't have caused him acute pain, Tony would have gotten hard all over again.

Groaning, Tony pulled his arms down, and just stopped himself from clumsily rolling over on his stomach and smearing the furs with the spend leaking out of his softening cock that had already made a mess on his stomach. He rolled his stiff shoulders trying not to whine too loudly, when he heard a loud clatter and what sounded like someone falling in the bathroom. Quietly cursing his healing rune for being slow on the uptake, Tony struggled out of bed, arms still burning from being restrained so long and stumbled as fast as he could towards the bathing chamber.

OoooO

"Lo! What's wrong?"

Loki, in his male aspect, was collapsed in a naked sprawl on the rough stone floor, shaking and gulping for air. The loud clatter he had heard had been a silver tray of soaps that was no longer perched on the wide rim of the tub, but was instead lying on the floor with scented rounds of soap scattered everywhere.

"Bambi!" Tony hurried over; dropping to his knees on the hard floor he worriedly rolled Loki over on his back. Gathered his shaking, trembling partner up, he lifted him until he was nestled almost in Tony's lap. "Are you hurt? What's wrong?" Tony questioned frantically, his free hand pressing the god's forehead, cheek, stomach, sides, everywhere.

Oh fuck, what's wrong?

His god was pale, shaking and had seemed to be having trouble focusing.

A low, seemingly pain induced keen accompanied a particularly violent series of shudders that rolled down Loki's body. Tony fought to keep from panicking.

A guard? Should he go send one for help? Why the fuck hadn't he been given one of those ear phone things?

“Should I send someone for Eir?”

”’s nufing,” The god shook his head and mumbled feebly as he tried to push Tony’s hands away, but he was trembling so much there was no strength behind his movements.

“Shhhhh Bambi, it’s okay. I’ve got you,” Tony murmured trying to keep the tears out of his voice at seeing his god so affected. Holding him close he tried to whisper reassuringly, “It will be fine Lo, I won’t let anything happen to you. I don’t want you to worry about anything. Whatever it is, we’ll fix it you see if we don’t.”

After several long minutes of rocking, holding Loki close and murmuring what he hoped were soothing reassurances, Loki finally spoke with pauses between each utterance.

“Too much. To change twice. In such a short time. Too much.”

The words thick with unshed tears and so low; Tony had to strain to hear him.

Tony spent a long moment to contemplate how Loki must feel to have his powers back, but still be so restricted. He didn’t like to see Loki like this, but he also wondered exactly how their evening would have gone if his god had been at full power. Hell, just with the tiny dregs of power he’d had access to tonight, the Trickster had managed to get the drop on him with no trouble what so ever.

Tony then reluctantly turned his thoughts to his own impatience this evening and how that had contributed to their evening... Going off track, he decided to call it.

He had time to ponder all of those things and the fact that his knees were killing him before Loki made his first abortive attempt to sit up on his own. It wasn’t a particularly successful attempt.

Glaring up at Tony, the muscles in his neck tense, and his jaw jutted, Loki ground out. “I’m not sorry, Stark.”

Which was fair enough, Tony thought. During his meditation on the o-so-hard floor, he’d reluctantly come to the conclusion that this evening had not been a good time for even playful impatience. Loki had been dealing with so many changes in his circumstances and hell, even in his body, that god had been too tense to deal with his partner being demanding. “Totally my fault,” Tony said and actually meant it. “Well, maybe twelve percent yours. I could make an argument for fifteen, but you know what, I’m not going to. I knew you were on edge, I should have let you have your turn without being so difficult.”

Brows drawn together, Loki looked up at him in bewilderment. As if he wasn’t used to people admitting that they had contributed to things going wrong. Letting out a pent-up breath, he again struggled unsuccessfully, gasping painfully and choking back tears, to sit up.

“Shhhhh. It’s all good. Don’t worry about it.” Tony soothed and petted. “You know you surprised me there, Bambi.” Loki winced, either in pain or remembrance Tony wasn’t sure. “But it’s okay,” He helped his god to sit up, biting back his own gasp. “Or it will be once I’ve... Or maybe, once we’ve, soaked for a while in a hot bath.” Leaning heavily against the tub he at last managed to stand up and reached down to help Loki to his feet and a light embrace. “Trust me, it’s all good.”

Looking mutinous Loki muttered, “It can’t be.”

“Sure it can.” Tony said lightly, tightening his embrace and burying his nose into this god’s neck. “I told you I like angry sex. And Bambi, when you deliver, you deliver in *spades*.”

Note Added - 02-24-2015 It has been suggested that it needed a lot more inner dialog of what people-were thinking. Since I can't do Tony's POV again with out rewriting the chapter... Which would you prefer?

This chapter as Loki saw it? With much inner thought included? or Nothing more to see here, moving on with our story? Let me know.

So we finally have some actual Loki/Tony smut. If you like it and want to see more, please do let me know what you think. Did it work? Didn't it work? What did or didn't work? Smut requires feedback if I am ever going to improve

.
As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* - Numerous intimate body parts mentioned. Specific Tab A into Slot B instructions. Some stuff that might be considered Dub Con in you squint at it. Bondage, Orgasm Delay, Anal Sex, M/M Sex, F/M sex if you are really picky possible Domestic Abuse and references to Dual Gender. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.*****

Lunch?

Chapter Summary

Yes, well... Sexy times? Some. Fluffy times? Oh yeah. Big brother time? Check. Messing with sasquatch? Errr, Siff and the boys? Oh hell yeah!

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the most wonderful Stella. Within six hours I might add, yes I was that late getting it to her, and she was fighting the flu. So many thanks to her! :D

Alrightly.... If you are a lurker who is still reading and haven't commented kudo'd yet, I do wish you would. It would make me ever so happy. Poor Anthony of Asgard's kudo numbers are abysmal compared to Queens Grace. :(

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 26 – Lunch!

“You know, Bambi... I ‘like’ angry sex.” Tony looked up with a suggestive smile, which grew wider as Loki lifted a disbelieving brow.

The mortal was insane. But Loki wasn't sure if it was his special Stark insanity or perhaps just the general Midgardian variety. However, he was sure that the words ‘bring it on big boy’ were supposedly uttered with all the fearless bravo of a man who knew himself vastly stronger than his opponent. He did wonder sometimes if Stark's much vaunted intelligence was perhaps slightly savant. There was no doubt that the man was an engineering genius but in so many other areas of his existence he was simply hopeless.

I am one of the most learned mages in the Nine Realms. Even with the handicap of this ridiculously weak mortal body, my knowledge of magic is so wide that I am still a force to be reckoned with. So what in the Nine is Stark even thinking to taunt me so?

One corner of his mouth curled in dark amusement. Apparently, not much.

Strong, Stark might be, but the man lumbered like a rock troll. One counter rotation of his hands later, Loki plucked a set of Berserker cuffs out of one of his pocket dimensions, several of which were now blessedly available to him, and launched himself at the short little mortal. In only a matter of seconds, the cuffs were secured and cutting Stark off from any strength attributes that he had not been born with. Taking advantage of both surprise and lust, Loki had him stretched out on

the bed and secured to it before Stark was aware of what exactly was happening.

Loki had barely a moment to examine the changes Odin had imposed on his male form. He was, in fact, trying pretty hard to ignore that any change had occurred at all until he had the time and privacy to deal with it. Therefore, he'd be damned if he was going to put up with Stark's rampant curiosity until he had satisfied his own. Sadly, the required consummation waited for no one.

"Heh. So I'm thinking getting stuff from your bag of infinite holding is not too power intensive then, huh?"

"Some planes are more easily accessed than others," Loki had agreed blandly. This was of course the truth, just not all of it. More areas would become available to him once his body had time to replenish its Seiðr. Unfortunately, several would be permanently barred to him since this wretched mortal body could not accumulate enough raw power to reach them. Sighing inwardly, Loki thought that it was perhaps for the best as his lack of power to reach in his most secured areas would reduce the temptation to attempt using some of the items stored there. Particularly those items that required not only highly refined skill to use, but also enormous amounts of power to control once invoked.

Yes, it was best not to even think about all the lovely things he had stored in those areas, Loki thought while running an admiring fingertip along the cuffs restraining Stark, a sharp tug assuring him that Stark was well and truly secured. "This is mostly to insure that busy little hands don't wander where they shouldn't," Loki whispered, his voice breathy with excitement as he lifted himself across Stark's thighs.

And if restraints meant that Stark was Loki's to do with as he pleases, well that was a very nice bonus. He and Stark had used restraints a time or two before and he was well aware that they excited Tony almost as much as they did him.

Commanding the lights to lower, Loki began scattering slow kisses that he knew would drive the mortal crazy. *Crazier*, he amended to himself since there was no measure that he knew of by which Stark could truly claim mental stability.

Lovely fluttering movements arose from his belly as Stark responded to his slow, indulgent, insistent kisses. After several minutes, his pretty genius was writhing beneath him, whining for more, which he gave him because he was after all a benevolent god. His kisses became more forceful, claiming kisses, the marks of which would show everyone tomorrow morning that it had been Stark who'd been subjugated, not him. Loki was hard pressed to decide which excited him more, the intoxicating smell of his pretty little genius, his small sharp cries and the involuntary gasps that Loki's roaming hands were able to draw from him, or the fact that come morning the court would see that one of Thor's shield brothers, who was also a hero of Midgard had been egri this evening and not the disgraced second prince.

While there was much this little mortal gained by joining with him, even if he refused to admit it to anyone, *Stark especially*, Loki was well aware of the obstacles the man had been forced to overcome for this alliance to occur.

Gently rutting up against Stark's hip, Loki curled his leg over Stark's, while his lips and hands drew gasps and strange strangled noises from the man. Or perhaps it was the position of Loki's inner knee, which was apparently allowing Stark to get in a little rutting of his own. All Loki knew was his habit of humming contentedly while playing was apparently being echoed by Stark to show when he was pleased with the quality of Loki's play.

Despite the fact that he much preferred Stark to worship him, the man's enthusiastic reactions to

his every touch were enough to interrupt Loki's humming and instead trigger a positive cascade of sentiment to fall from his lips.

Sentiment that a startled Stark reacted to in a very satisfying way. Loki very much liked it when those gorgeous amber eyes sought confirmation from him. On a more physical note a slight twist of his wrist had Tony's hips arching off the bed with a particularly gratifying whine.

"I love the sounds you make, Stark," he whispered, nosing aside the hair at the nape of Stark's neck so he could breathe him in. There was that exhilarating combination of desire mixed with the musky spice and just a hint of metal that he has long since associated with this man. But that now was overlaid with affection of a type that he could not get from anyone else these days. The mortal's smell triggered and answering tug of need causing him to become not only painfully stiff, but also producing a confusing, completely disorienting ache deep within him, a feeling he normally only experienced in his female form.

There was also a feeling of safety associated with Stark's scent, while the man had not always been kind to him, he had not tried to twist events so that his betrayals and misdeeds could be cast as acts of love or caring. Pausing a moment in his ministrations, Loki burrowed his face against the crook of Stark's neck. Loki had lived for just over a millennium and the only person who claimed to love him that he can now even pretend to believe, is a mortal that he has known for less than twenty years. He had mourned the loss of his father and brother when this whole mess started, but the loss of his mother is so recent that the pain of it continues to slice at him from out of nowhere as tears and a totally unexpected ache rose within him.

Unaware of his thoughts, Stark's cheek nudging against his own, recalled him to the matter at hand. Drawing upon centuries of practice, feelings of loss and despair were quickly and efficiently shoved into a mental box before they had him completely breaking. While this does as always leave him more than a little detached from the activity at hand, at least the pain will cease as long as he distracts himself and doesn't dwell on it.

This should not be a problem this evening, as he has a most welcome distraction at hand. Literally.

Lifting up a bit, Loki took in how Stark's tongue flicked out to touch his bruised, glistening lips and the sensuous way his half lidded eyes fluttered shut as Loki's hand slid slowly over Stark's dripping cock, applying pressure for a few moments before drifting lower still, slowly gripping his balls, rolling and tugging on them in turn, gently at first and then more firmly. When Stark began moaning slowly and making small, helpless thrusting motions with his hips, Loki wrapped his long fingers around his cock and once again took possession of his mouth.

Just as Loki found himself getting lost in the sensation of trading incoherent exclamations and stealing kisses back and forth, Stark's breathing went ragged as he started bucking hard against Loki's hand. Languidly refocusing his attention on Stark's nipples brought forth such a volley of complaints and demands that Loki was shocked out of the pleasant haze that had been enveloping him.

It took quite a while for Loki to get back to that floating, sensual, peaceful state. And distressingly, it seemed that no sooner did he achieve it, than Stark would once again jar him out of it.

He tried to feel bad about what happened. He honestly did. But there was only so much complaining and hair pulling a person could be expected to put up with before they took... Steps.

As far as Loki was concerned, the bite and makeshift cock ring were totally justified. Perhaps not the spanking. However, if Stark denied him the opportunity for activities that allowed him quiet contentment then he felt he was owed at least that little bit of enjoyment.

OoooO

Groaning, Tony rolled over and buried his head deeper in his pillow. He didn't know who was pounding on the door of his suite, but they weren't getting in, that was for sure. The absolute last thing Tony's demanding little bundle of Asgardian joy had done before collapsing into a coma like sleep, was to demand that those decorative metal accents running up each side of the doors be swung across to secure them. So now the main entry door and the door to his bedroom had hi and low security cross bars protecting the two of them from invading marauder hordes... Or worse, key wielding senior servants.

Stretching, Tony was relieved that the combination of his healing rune and last night's long hot soak with his tall hot god had managed to soothe most of the aches and pains that angry sex normally left behind. Lifting his head blearily, Tony sniffed, while the floral smell still dominated, there was something crisper mixed in with it. The breeze entering from the open balcony was cool enough that snuggling under the velvet coverlet was comfortable without it being too chilly on his hands and face. Blinking at the bright light flooding the room, Tony figured it was way past dawn. Focusing his gaze closer at hand, he noted that Loki was still in the same blanket wrapped ball he had been the night before.

Well, that wasn't going to work.

Unstressed Loki had a way of sprawling out when he slept that left little room for anyone else in the bed. Of course, that had been while sharing Tony's California king sized bed. When he'd first visited, Tony had thought that the huge assed bed in Loki's room had been just because he was a prince. Scooting over the expanse of bed between them, he snuggled up to his partner, draping himself along the god's curled back. Apparently not, if the guest room bed was the same size.

Encouraged by the lack of pounding at the door, Tony brushed Loki's hair out of the way so he wouldn't pull on it... Because that would doubtless get him killed, and rested his head on the oversized pillow they were now sharing and prepared to go back to sleep. As his hand insinuated its way under Loki's arm to rest against the god's belly, Tony decided that no matter how it pained his interior designer, he was going to have to up his game, décor wise, and order one of those ultra-beds that all those rich basketball players bought. His last thought before he dropped off again to sleep was fuck the interior decorator; he would let Loki redesign the whole room, maybe even import the shit from Asgard if it would make his god feel more at home.

OoooO

"Stark?" The sleep roughened, yet still dulcet tones of his god semi-roused Tony.

"Yeah, Bambi?" Tony muttered into the soft hair, pressing himself closer to the almost naked form stretched out so long and lean beside him. A slightly more alert part of his brain informed him in passing that Gods not curled into tight tense balls were a good thing.

"Do me a favor and shoot Thor for waking me up?"

Tony's hand absently patted his god's tummy, "Sure thing, Bambi." He yawned before asking drowsily, "Now?" He was willing of course but didn't really want to move just at this moment.

What? He was comfortably curled around a smoking hot god. Of course he didn't want to move.

With an affirmative hum, Loki rolled over facing Tony and pulled his covers high.

Tony's hand, which was now resting on a nicely warm rump, very reluctantly retreated as he sleepily reached for his suit bracelets on the night stand. Due to the size of the bed, his questing hand fell about a foot short and he ended up patting the bed searchingly. "Can't right now, Lo," He slurred, rolling back to tuck his head under the younger god's chin and sneak his hand again under Loki's draped arm to curl around his god's waist.

"Can we have a bookshelf head board?" While enunciation was not currently his friend, he was managing to be coherent at least.

"I guess," Loki sighed in reply. "If you want." A hand brushed through Tony's hair before Loki again rested his chin on Tony's head, and tugged the covers up so they covered Tony's back and his arm, which came to rest across Tony's shoulders.

"Yay."

Hidden storage configurations and discrete anchor points drifted on candy floss clouds across Tony's mind as he sank back to sleep.

"You both have to get up." An exasperated annoying voice said from very far away.

"NOW!"

Both Tony and Loki started, Thor's booming tone took on a driven note. "You should have already presented yourselves in the receiving room. The departure lunch is starting shortly and you aren't even dressed yet!"

On a good day Tony did not respond well to people trying to tell him what to do. Right now? With an armful of nearly naked relaxed godling pressed warmly against him? He definitely didn't want to hear anyone telling him to get up. "Fuck off, Thor. We do what we want," Tony growled into Loki's collarbone, holding him tighter and determinedly squeezing his eyes shut.

Furs, comforter, cashmere soft blanket and the smooth top sheet all whirled away, leaving a startled Tony, wide eyed, naked, and no longer snuggly warm. Goose bumps instantly appeared everywhere as his body now had to deal with the definitely cool breeze that the covers had kept so handily at bay. Apparently, what he wanted to do right now was freeze to death.

"Thor, I swear I'm going to kill you," Tony hissed angrily, finding himself getting even madder as his god sat up, taking the last bit of warmth with him.

"Get. Out!" A very sleep tousled Loki demanded, pointing at the balcony archway with a long, elegant, and very emphatic finger.

"Nay Loki, tis time to get up." Thor replied with all the smug assurance normal to a sibling on a mission from mom. Tony buried his face in the pillow beneath him, smothering several choice curses.

"Tony?" Thor's normally booming voice was faint with more than a dash of confusion.

Turning back over, not caring if Point Break had to look at his junk or not, Tony shot him an irritable glare. Curiously... Appalled and stuffed were warring to be Thor's dominate expression. "What exactly is that now adorning your back side?" the Thunder god rumbled in a faintly horrified voice.

"What it is, is none of your god damn business, you blanket snatching bastard," Tony huffed angrily, slipping off the bed to snatch up his robe and put it on.

"I am not a child, Thor, to be roused out of bed like this." Loki snapped brushing wisps of soft black hair out of his face.

"Indeed you aren't, but you are *late*. The attendants have been trying to wake the two of you for well over an hour." Thor picked up the other robe that had been swirled off the bottom of the bed with the blankets and tossed it to Loki. Who immediately balled it up and tossed it right back at him before sliding his silk clad ass out of bed.

"I'm letting the attendants in *now*." Thor warned with his arms crossed.

"Well, I certainly hope they sent a hairdresser, or lunch will be over before I have gotten these out of my hair," Loki sniped nastily over his shoulder with both hands gesturing at his hair beads as he stalked to the bath chamber.

"Did the sight of people sleeping comfortably offend you, Pikachu?" Tony demanded, glaring angrily as his not-brother-in-law opened the bedroom door.

"It would not have been necessary if you had not barred the doors, Tony." Thor replied in a harassed voice.

"Yeah? Not me. Also, about that." Wrapping his robe around himself, Tony stomped after Thor, his bare feet making loud thuds on the polished stone floor. "What in the hell is the sense of having these freaking cross bars if the damn balcony is open to anyone on a flying boat?"

"There are wards on the balcony, Tony."

"Which a Squib like you just passed right through? Some wards." Tony knew he sounded snippy, but he really didn't care. He had been warm, he had been snuggling his god and now he wasn't. So, as far as he was concerned, snippy was very much the order of the day. Thank you very much.

"They can be manually set to stay closed, Tony. However unless they are, they automatically drop at dawn to allow fresh air into the palace."

"Automatically?" Tony asked, appalled. "Even in the winter?" Thor nodded absently, moving the bars on the main door. "Who are you people?" Tony gasped, looking at Thor in mock horror.

Thor threw open the door with a totally uncalled for flourish before stating, "Right now we are people who are going to be late for lunch if you don't hurry."

In addition to the three guards on duty, there were the four females, two were the attendants from last night, another one carrying a case that Tony thought might be the hairdresser, and the last was an older woman with a determined expression who was carrying green and black garments. Apparently, elf garb was not going to be tolerated at lunch. Not that Loki had another outfit he could have worn.

Tony made a mental note to send a guard with a message asking that elf clothier visit Loki so several more outfits could be made. After all, anything that made Odin's blood pressure go up was worth every penny it costs. And if it made Loki smile at the same time? Priceless.

Then the color drained from Tony's face as he thought of something else that made Loki smile. "You know what guys? Give me a minute, okay." Tony held his hands out in a 'stay right here' position and then turned and practically scampered back into the bedroom his light weight robe billowing around him, possibly to the detriment of modesty.

"Tony!"

Rolling his eyes, Tony spun around, robe clutched shut with one hand, heavy assed door in the other.

“Fuck! One minute. Can I just have one damn minute?!” Tony yelled at the confused blonde before he slammed the bedroom door shut. Casting a wild eye around the room, he was glad to see that the pillows were covering the handcuffs and chain. So bondage gear was halfway slipped down between the mattress and headboard. Excellent that meant it was highly doubtful that Point Break had seen them this morning.

Thank god for that.

Snatching up Loki’s discarded robe, Tony hurriedly climbed onto the bed, pulled the open cuffs and connecting chain loose from the headboard and bundled them into the robe right before Thor pounded on the bedroom door. Tony practically skipped across the room towards the dressing room before Thor could enter the bedroom.

Tony did not think that this was the only restraint apparatus possessed by a god who had the Room of Requirements at the tips of his green glowing finger tips. Especially not when said god got into that sort of thing. However, he did want to examine the damn things before he decided whether he was going to give them back. In the meantime, they didn’t need to be left lying around for Thor to gawk at, or to scare the maids, or for Loki to stash away for the next time Tony pissed him off. These babies needed to be safely locked away in Tony’s suitcase, as in, the gold titanium alloy one with the biometric locks.

OoooO

Traversing the corridors on the way to the dining hall, Tony almost felt sorry for Thor.

Almost.

While poor Thor had achieved some of his objectives, like Loki not rocking a High Elf outfit or makeup. The guy had failed in that Tony was rocking Midgardian wear, and if it was not the jeans and t-shirt he wanted, then neither was it the leather fetish bondage gear preferred as Asgardian court wear.

“You know I hate these clothes,” Tony had groused to Loki, who was already being strapped into his outfit by two of the attendants.

“Then don’t wear them.”

“But your mom—“

“Stark. You are a prince of Midgard, you do not have to wear anything you don’t want to.” The older of Loki’s two attendants, the one who had brought the outfit he was currently being wrestled into tch’d loudly. Loki ignored her. “Wear one of your own suits. I assure you that would be acceptable. After all, you are not Æsir, you do not have to dress like them no matter what the All Mother would prefer.”

“So I could wear jeans and a t-shirt?” He asked, knowing he couldn’t but just trying to see if he could get a rise out of the godling.

“You can, of course, do anything you wish,” Loki stated, holding his arms out at his sides so that his chest plate could be buckled on. “It might be thought rude to wear such casual clothes to an official event. However, do as you wish.”

Tony thought about it a moment, while he desperately wanted to wear the more casual clothes, his suit would cover more of the souvenirs that Loki had given him on his neck last night. Additionally, it would also conceal the light bruising on his wrists. Light because Tony is not stupid enough to fight handcuffs when there is no real need. He was pretty sure a message was being sent and the glare Thor received from Loki when he offered to call for a healing stone pretty much confirmed it. Besides, non-serious bruising normally faded within twenty-four hours thanks to his Servitor's Rune, so Tony had declined Thor's help with a laugh. After all, he really didn't give a damn what Asgard thought and besides, he was interested to see where his Trickster was going with this.

OoooO

Lunch was a much more relaxed affair. Apparently, those people high enough on the food chain to have been offered overnight accommodations gathered to mingle, share a last meal, and say their goodbyes. After a turn around the room, Tony confirmed with Thor that all the Earthgardian officials had been escorted home last night and the crowd would mainly be personal friends, rulers of neighboring states and the highest of the Asgardian court.

"Hi guys!" A familiar voice chirped behind them. "Whoa Stark, I didn't know you two were still in high school."

"Bite me, Short, Dark and Buxom," Tony retorted good naturedly, a few marks on his neck were not the most embarrassing thing he'd ever had to deal with in public. Besides, it certainly beat having someone mark you by peeing on your pant leg.

"Looks like someone already did," Darcy countered her nose and the corners of her eyes crinkling in amusement. "And look at you," She gave him a mock arm punch. "Noticing my rack when you haven't been married twenty-four hours? And have been good and totally owned? Nice."

"Lady Darcy," Loki took her hand and made an elaborate bow, peeping up mischievously as he brushed his lips over the tips of her fingers. Tony rolled his eyes at her delighted squeak.

After Loki released her fingers, with an unmistakably pleased smirk on her face, Darcy hugged herself a moment before twitching the sleeves of her high necked, wine colored Asgardian dress back into place. "And that, Tony Snark, is how you greet a lady." She added, poking a finger slightly painfully at Tony's chest.

Not that he wanted to encourage her thinking they were friends or anything, because he had a feeling that her aiding and abetting his Trickster would be more trouble than he wanted to deal with. But despite those misgivings, he did enjoy sparing with the diminutive sass-master so Tony indicated that she should join them as they headed towards a nearby seating nook. Fast moving servants appeared out of nowhere and set down drink pitchers, large platters of finger foods and all the necessary plates, napkins and glassware.

"And how exactly do you greet a psycho bitch?" Tony inquired genially, restarting their conversation once the servants had disappeared as quickly as they'd arrived.

"Let's find out, shall we?" Loki interrupted before the Darcy could return Tony's last volley. He motioned towards the group approaching them.

"Xena," Tony called cheerfully, discreetly checking to see that neither Thor nor Pepper were within earshot. "How ya doing. You know, I didn't see you guys at the high table last evening. Not that I minded, made it easier to get a word in edgewise and all, but still. How far below the salt do they seat you when you aren't hanging on to Thor's cape?"

Snorting, Darcy waved one hand frantically and tried to swallow the bite of meat roll she had just taken, before it choked her.

“Stark.” Sif said, greeting him with all the enthusiasm of someone who just found a dead rat in their underwear drawer. Fancy Pants and Teller muttered something that could have been taken as a polite greeting if Tony were so inclined.

“Prinsgemal Stark, Sif.” Loki corrected, his voiced edged with iron even if his expression was that of someone making an offhanded observation. His brow raised in bemusement as the three Asgardians seated themselves around the low round table. “Did you know that in addition to being a hero of Midgard and one of its wealthiest citizens, Prinsgemal Stark has also been made a Jarl and named the Ambassador to Midgard?”

Before anyone could comment, a harried Thor approached. “Loki, mother has been waiting to speak with you. Did you not do your duty when you arrived?”

Huffing, Loki stood, Tony rose also. “And exactly where is the queen right now?” Loki asked, pretending not to notice how that form of address for Frigga caused Thor’s eye to twitch.

“Privately,” Thor said, waving Tony back down. “Mother wishes to speak to you privately. She is near the entrance to the Maidens Walk.” Loki’s lips tightened.

“I won’t be long,” Loki said, sweeping off, Thor and his escort falling in around him.

“Ambassador? You?” Darcy said after a long moment. Tony shrugged, picking through the platters to fill the small plate in front of him.

Plate loaded, Tony watched Sif reaching for a pitcher to refill her goblet, apparently using that movement to surreptitiously check to see if anyone was close enough to hear her before she sneered, “I suppose the All Father decided he needed to lavish you with titles to get you to accept him.”

Both Tony and Darcy snorted, and then met each other’s eye’s with a grin.

“You guys do know Tony spent a fortune to get this permission, right? King Odin didn’t bribe him with those titles. And it surprised the heck out of Tony when he found out he was being named ambassador. What?” Darcy demanded, looking at the raised brows Tony was giving her. “It’s not like they aren’t going to find this out. Thor couldn’t keep a secret if you duct-taped his mouth shut.”

Tony suppressed a laugh and instead tossed some sort of caramelized nut in his mouth. Hazelnut?

“You should not be speaking about Prince Thor like that.” Hogun’s voice was low and rusty sounding. Basically the kind of voice you would expect from someone who rarely contributed to the conversation.

“Yeah, not even talking to you.” Darcy said dismissively, keeping her eyes on what was to her the main event, Sif and Fandral.

“Actually, you are fairly luckier th

He might not have that Suit on, but Tony was far from helpless. Lips tightly pressed together and practically vibrating with anger, he debated if it was mini-repulsor time. From all the SHIELD’s files, that chat in Odin’s study, and the stuff he’d gleamed from Loki over the years, he just flat didn’t like the promenaded bastard. So it wasn’t like he was jealous or anything. And he especially

didn't like the insolent, overly meaningful look the bastard was giving him. Nor the one he was getting from Siffy and Genghis Kahn either, for that matter.

Darcy nudged Tony's foot with hers and gave Robin Hood a wide eyed, interested look that was so completely bogus Tony wondered how she could even keep a straight face. "You know, Thor talks about you guys a lot, too. What the hell kind of title is Fandral the Dashing? You a message runner or something? I haven't seen a car since I got here, that has got to be exhausting."

"Yes, Thor had quite a lot to say about you also." Fandral said apparently deciding to dismiss Darcy from his consideration. He instead focused his attention on Tony, leering knowingly as he took in the various bruises on Tony's neck. It was all Tony could to keep himself from tugging down his cuffs and possibly drawing attention to the bruises there also.

"Speaking of tiring, you my Midgardian friend look weary. Were you perhaps bucked off a time or two during your ride last night?"

Called it.

Tony had repeatedly told Loki that it didn't matter what a bunch of sword swinging yutzes thought about him being an egri magic user. Apparently now was the time for him to put his money where his mouth was. Besides, he honestly didn't care what Asgard thought about him. Fuck, he barely cared about Earth and even then it was only because Pep would kill him if he drove their stock prices down too much.

Pulling out his patented are-you-really-that-stupid eye roll, Tony clapped his hands together and then threw them up as if in disbelief. Yeah, it was overdone, but he was dealing with clueless Space Vikings after all. "Of course I look tired. You try having a gorgeous long legged Norse god plow into you all night and we'll see how tired you'd look," Tony grouched. "And without coffee in the morning? It doesn't bear thinking about."

He was pleased to see a completely slack-jaw, gob-smacked expression on John Freida's face. Eyes twinkling, he noticed that Silent Bob and Sekhmet were looking shocked. Well, okay, Silent Bob just looked silent, but the other two were taking up the slack for him. And unnoticed behind them? Thor and Loki. When the fuck had they returned? Still, in the land of the sexually repressed, it was double down time and Tony never shied away from that. Hell, he had shrink sessions scheduled on account of it.

"You know what? On second thought, don't. No, seriously, don't think about it. I don't share and it isn't like he would touch any of you, anyhow. He has standards, you know." Loki bit a knuckle as his shoulders started to shake.

"You would allow yourself..." Fandral trailed off aghast. The Posse Three eyeing Tony like he was from another planet. Which was fair enough, since he totally was. Thor was just giving him that long suffering look he usually reserved for his baby bro. And baby bro's eyes were lit with unholy amusement as he took it all in.

"Hell yeah, I would allow myself." Tony asserted, elbowing Darcy to get her to stop giggling, which she had started once she had noticed the return of the Weatherwax brothers. "If you think that turnabout is not fair play, you're crazy. I mean, have you ever looked at the guy? Who wouldn't want to be fucked by him?"

"Tony!" Thor barked, his posse whipping around and noticing the returned brothers with dismay.

"What?"

“That is not something we should be speaking of in this place,” Older brother harmonics vibrated through every syllable. Poor Thor, the last two days just seemed destined to age him. Still, it was his friends who were causing the fuss and had started it in the first place.

“Why not,” Tony demanded truculently and pointing an accusing finger at Fandral. “He brought it up first.”

“Peace Thor, Starkson jests of course, no real warrior would allow himself to be owned in such a—”

Jerking his shoulder, he tossed Darcy off of him. She was muffling her howling laughter with a napkin and practically flailing on the bench they shared. Yeah, so he wasn’t a warrior. Brow lowered and lip stuck out belligerently Tony scowled. He was better than a warrior, he was a fucking *hero*. With an entire line of action figures to prove it. Thank you very much.

“Hey, Adam Lambert!” Tony snapped, making a cutting motion in the air with his hand. “Not that it is any of your business, but I’m the one with his name tattooed on my ass, not the other way around.”

Fandral gave Tony a strained smile. No doubt ready to smooth everything over and stop baiting the Midgardian now that they had a royal audience. “Not likely from the tales Thor has told of your prowess, Son of Stark.”

“First. Enough with the ‘*Son of Stark*’ and ‘*Starkson*’ crap. ‘*Stark*’ will do. Second... What do you want me to do to convince you? Drop trou and let you check it out personally? Cause that is so not going to happen, my ass is way too fine for some third string ‘*sidekick*’ to be checking it out.” Tony snapped. “I’m a god damned *hero*; millions of people know my name, but at the end of the day? I do what I want, and that includes letting Tall, Dark and Sexy over there occasionally own my ass.”

Tony fixed a gimlet glare on the dandy and asked in a hard voice, “You got a problem with that, hon?”

Chapter End Notes

Since opinion was split on Sexy times Vs Moving along I decided to split the chapter between them and then just to confuse things I also tossed in some fluff and humor. Please let me know which part(s) you liked the best or didn't like.

The next chapter will see quite a bit of movement, *if* I can figure out a way to knit it all together. I do apologize for the delay on this one, but take heart that chapters 28 and 29 were completed over six months ago, I will just need to bash them into the story line we are now following. We really do all owe Stella a big round of applause. If not for her speed and working while so sick this chapter likely wouldn't have posted for another week. Plus she is killer good at adding and suggesting snippets when an area is a bit thin. *claps loudly*

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* - Numerous intimate body parts mentioned. Specific Tab A into Slot B instructions. Some stuff that might be considered Dub Con in you squint at it. Bondage, References to Anal Sex, M/M Sex, F/M sex and if you are really picky Domestic Abuse and a homophobic culture. If these are a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.*****

A Masterful Performance Indeed

Chapter Summary

Tying up loose ends at lunch or pissing people off? Why not both?

Chapter Notes

Okay then... As many of you know, I have a problem with transitions. Not news right? Anyhow, we have several little sections to get through before the final arc starts so rather than ham-fistedly jam them together... You are going to get several short chapters. Bummer yes, but to make it a tad less painful I will try to update every two days or so. Otherwise you might not get anything until next week. Besides, the bit after this one fought me tooth and nail until about 4 am when it started to jell. Problem is I am too tired to finish it and fire it off to my beta. But I will in the morning, cause now I know where it's going.

Many thanks to my Beta Stella for all her hard work and putting up with my slacker ways.

No trigger warnings on this one.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 27 - A Masterful Performance Indeed

When Stark was finished, the only person making a sound was Darcy. By the way she was gasping into that damn napkin, tears streaming down her face and kicking her heels against the floor, you would have thought she was a youngling escaped from her tutors rather than a supposedly mature woman approaching Midgardian middle age. It was, of course, a disgraceful lapse of decorum, but Loki couldn't find it within himself to dislike Darcy.

Loki rolled an amused eye towards his—Thor who was staring in dismay at his Avenger Shield brother, however, Thor's expression did not even come close to matching the horrified expression on Fandral's face.

“Very good, Stark,” Loki said with a wry smile, clapping softly. “A masterful performance, indeed.”

“Heh.” Tony raised both brows and said smugly, “I am just that good, you know.”

“Oh indeed I do,” Loki purred in a tone that he would later learn sounded more predatory than pleased in Tony's opinion.

“So,” Tony held up the empty plate Loki had left when called away to attend the queen. “Lunch?”

“Perhaps later.” Shifting his attention towards Thor’s friends, Loki saw that they were all making small moves towards leaving while keeping their faces as neutral as they could manage. Hogun was of course doing the best job, Sif the worst. “Thank you all for entertaining Tony while I was gone. I am sure it was as instructive for you as it was entertaining to me.” He gifted Sif with a wintery little smirk. “Darcy, if you could pull yourself together, I am sure that Thor will want to escort you to his beloved Lady Jane.”

Darcy wiped the tears from her eyes with the napkin, and then opened them very wide and blinking a few times. “Okay. Okay. I’m better.” Darcy blew out a gusty breath while she stood and reordered her clothes, including casually hiking the bodice of her dress and her breasts into place. No one present apparently being considered important enough for her to do it more discretely. Tony coughed into his fist.

“If I don’t see you again before you leave, I do hope we get a chance to speak when next I am on Midgard.” Loki told her as she started to move out from behind the table.

“Oh yeah.” Tony said sarcastically. “Totally looking forward to seeing you again, Lois.”

“Snark, you totally know my last name, so don’t even go there.” Darcy turned away from Stark and made shooing motions with her hands at Hogun. “Well, move. I certainly can’t climb over you.” She mocked a thoughtful look. “Okay, so I could, but I am not going to give you the pleasure of rubbing up--”

“Darcy!”

“Yeah, yeah. Hold your lightning bolts there, big guy, I’m coming. Well, not coming...” Darcy’s words trailed off into a mild grumble as she swept Hogun and Fandral before her to get out of the alcove.

The admonitory looks given to his friends by Thor had not gone unnoticed. Especially not by Stark, who covertly wagged his thumb slightly towards them as if asking Loki if they needed to chat with those three idiots before they left or if it was all good. From the intensity of Thor’s glare, Loki judged the group would not be speaking about Stark’s startling pronouncement until the next time one of them got completely drunk. So he shook his head no. They had a few days’ grace before the court rumor mill exploded.

As Thor, Darcy and the Idiots Four moved away, servants swooped in to clear the table for the next group that might want it. Loki turned to Tony and indicated the room at large. “Stark, shall we go find Pepper before she has to leave and thank her for all her assistance?”

OoooO

“So... What did Queen Mum want?” Tony asked as they left Thor, Darcy and the posse.

“She wanted to let me know that a payables clerk from the royal accountant’s office will be here to speak with you at the sixth chime.”

“So why didn’t she just have Thor tell you that?”

“Because she used it as an excuse to get me to come see her, she wanted me to walk with her as she did her rounds.” He shrugged. “When I told her I did not think it proper to leave you on your own at this time, she bade me to bring you to her.”

“So, we’re headed that way now?”

“No.” Loki replied coolly nodding at a passing matron.

Since by all accounts, including the Tricksters own, he had been a major Momma’s boy, this new coldness on Loki’s part was most likely not sitting too well with Loki Momma, or Not-Momma as it appeared she had been reduced to. However, this was not Tony’s battle, so he refrained from giving advice that would certainly not be appreciated. Instead, Tony greeted the people presented to him and tried not to laugh at some of the scandalized once overs he was receiving when Loki stopped to talk and chatted with various guests.

“Loki.” Frigga called, having just appeared out of nowhere and gliding up to them.

Tony was amazed at how much hurt and disappointment could be packed in only four letters. Of course, when they turned around to acknowledge Queen Frigga, he was even more amazed at how she controlled her expression. Anyone looking over towards them would only see a warm interested smile, and have no clue at the covert drama Loki was about to be subjected to. “How long are you going to keep this up?” It took Tony a long moment to realize that she was referring to Loki’s avoidance of her.

“Oh, I don’t know.” Loki brushed a long fingertip idly across his lip, before tapping his chin with it and asking with an air of polite disinterest, “How long did you?” For the merest moment a sour look flicked across Frigga’s otherwise serene expression.

“This is unacceptable.” Frigga said calmly flicking a glance towards Stark. Or rather towards Stark’s bruises.

Coming down from a minor lunch induced sugar rush and wishing like hell he’d remembered to bring coffee, Tony was not in the best frame of mind to listen to the Queen of Everything while she berated her youngest, no matter how soft spoken she was while doing it. But unfortunately this was apparently now on his ‘to-do’ list.

“He needs to see a healer at once.” Frigga continued, loosening the hands clasped serenely in front of her, and preparing to signal one of her attendants.

“I think *not*.” Loki hissed, his voice low, but so angry that Frigga abruptly stopped and turned an astonished gaze upon Loki. “Don’t you even think about doing that if you expect me to continue this farce with even a shred of decorum.”

“Umm, Lo? If you are going to fight with your mom, you might want to move it outside where there is less chance of being overheard.” Tony suggested, totally ignoring the tightened expression on Loki’s face when he’d used the word ‘mom’, and started steering Loki over to a large, pretty much empty, grassy area just outside the Gather Hall. Frigga kept silent pace with them, her attendants as always trailed behind her just out of ear shot.

“Loki, please be reasonable. What will people think? What will your fath-- Odin say?”

Her concern of a mortal’s wellbeing over his own was hardly surprising, Loki thought bitterly. After all, it wasn’t like he was important to her or anything.

“They will think much different things than they will if you erase all my good work.” Loki snapped, refusing to meet her eye and instead looking out one of the decorative gated arches allowing a view of the city streets far below.

“You know,” Tony butted in, “Being called ergi would not be the worst thing anyone has ever accused me of.” He motioned towards the marks on his neck. “In fact, the eighties were a bit of a

blur for me and frankly, there was a couple of spots in the nineties that aren't too clear either, but I have photographic evidence posted on You Tube of me being caught in public in the more compromising positions you can imagine." Tony crinkled his face up in a rueful smile. "With partners of both sexes I might add, so I'm not really that worried about this. No matter what Odin or Asgard thinks about it, it's a non-issue as far as I am concerned."

"But Anthony, it could cause long lasting problems for you."

"Really?" Tony lifted a doubtful brow. "Well then, maybe that's Asgard's problem, not mine. Because if you don't think that--" Tony stopped, pressing his lips tightly together to keep back the rest of his thought. "Never mind. You know what? I just don't care what a bunch of Space Vikings think of me. Let's just leave it at that."

Still maintaining a pleasant demeanor Frigga tilted her head giving Tony a thoughtful look and a tight little smile. "I will look forward to you demonstrating that for me in the future Prinsgemal Stark." The smile disappeared as she turned away from any potential on lookers and regarded Loki. "You are aware of my thoughts on this matter. Perhaps when you have considered a moment, you may come to a different decision. I think perhaps it best that I stay near the All Father. If he hasn't already heard, it will not be long before this tale finds his ear." She nodded, plastering a politically pleasant expression on her face before gathering her skirts and heading back towards the Gather Hall's arch.

"Nice talking to you," Tony called after Frigga watching as her ladies fell in behind her with practiced ease. Tony and an overall genial Loki circulated another twenty minutes until they found Pepper and her husband Dale talking to Steve.

Chapter End Notes

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.
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Time Passages

Chapter Summary

Times passages and a discussion of what 'is' is. :D

Chapter Notes

I know it's short. I do what I want okay? Don't judge. *disappears*

Many thanks to my Beta Stella for all her hard work and excellent suggestions for improvement.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 28 - Time Passages

During Loki's first visit back to Earthgard after becoming an official Stark, and after another particularly grueling session with the Crane brothers, they were working on one of their group activities by sitting in a large soaking tub in the penthouse suite surrounded by numerous slices of kaffir lime, Chinese grapefruit leaves and jasmine flowers.

So Tony'd spent a bit of time looking stuff up on the net, it wasn't a crime. At the very worst, he might have to give up his man card for a week or two.

Tony tossed a hooded look at the blissed out god rocking slowly back and forth on his lap, brows slightly furrowed above closed eyes, lower lip bit in concentration.

Totally worth it.

While the fragrant cloud rising from the water didn't smell quite as good as whatever the Asgardians had used, it was close enough that it didn't seem to bother the delightfully slippery god straddling his lap. Loki paused his slow rolling grind to cover Tony's face with slow sensual kisses while lustful fingers ran up and down his sides. Occasionally his god leaned back so those clever fingers could rub wet circles around his nipples before gently plucking them into pebbly hardness.

Blissed was good. Tony could work with blissed.

"Lokiiiiiii?" Tony softly lulled lifting his hands from the globes of Loki's ass they had been kneading, to scoop warm scented water on his god's back.

"Hummmm?" Loki was much too busy nibbling at the pulse points on Tony's neck to actually use words. But he did decide to run his tongue lightly against the outside edge of Tony's ear which felt very nice indeed.

"Lo, I wanna ask you a question, okay?" Tony alternated scooping handfuls of warm water on

Loki's back with slowly stroking down long, lean muscles until his palms ended up all the way down on the back of Loki's thighs.

"Um huh," Loki answered, pulling back a second to look at Tony, his eyes heavily lidded, before he dipped back down to press a kiss in the hair at Tony's temple. Not incidentally rubbing his slick torso against Tony's.

Which totally did not cause Tony to gasp. Or at least, not much.

Keeping his eyes open with more than a bit of effort, he watched Loki's face as he asked, "Do you, my adorable Trickster, know why this temporary tattoo won't wash off my ass?"

Loki froze for the briefest instant and then, the tiniest little smile curled up the corners of his mouth. This was pretty much all that Tony needed to confirm that Loki had indeed known the tat wasn't really temporary.

"It's not temporary, is it?" He asked sternly, looking up into mirth filled green eyes.

"I guess that would depend on whether the Midgard definition of temporary is the same as the Æsir definition," Was Loki's slightly snickering reply. So yeah, the stern look was totally not working for him right now.

Groaning, Tony dropped his head on Loki's chest, which was now shaking with suppressed laughter. If he had known that the Asgard version of temporary wasn't ... If he had known that... He still most likely would have still let Loki put it on him, but he would have insisted that it be placed much lower, so the top half of it wouldn't show above the band of his underwear when he was changing out at the gym, or when his tailor was measuring him for a suit.

"Okay, asshole. Exactly how long does a temporary tattoo last in Asgard?"

"Not very long," Loki consoled him, seemingly suppressing further laughter only with the greatest of effort while running damp hands through Tony's hair and smoothing it back from his face. "I would say, perhaps no more than ten years. Perhaps twenty at the most."

"You are such a brat."

Tony sighed.

"You know the paparazzi are going to have a field day the next time they catch me at the beach. Don't you?" Tony grouched, raising his face up so the kisses on his hair could instead be planted on his face. He had never worn a tank top for swimming in his life, but he could see where they might figure heavily in his future.

Chapter End Notes

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.
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Time Passages - What you want, what you get

Chapter Summary

Someone remembers, someone reflects. What you want vs What you get.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd and WTF'd by the wonderful Stella. You guys all owe her a big round of applause for the WTF's notes she leaves me during the beta'ing. Oh and suggestions, really cool ones! :D

A bit longer than last one, which I suppose it couldn't help but be right? :D
Transitions..... Ha! Don't care, posting this shit separate! Muhahahaah!

***** TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES *****

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 29 - Time Passages, what you want, what you get

Loki looked up from the materials schedule he was working on and nodded briefly for his guard to let the man approach him. It was strange how things worked out sometimes. In Loki's last therapy session, he had spoken of how this very man had been part of the team he had liberating pain elixir for him last year. Accepting the package that had already been scanned by his guards and which hopefully contained copies of the guard rosters he was looking for; Loki placed it in his file satchel and extracted a small envelope to give the man in return. Now that he had the resources to buy this man's willing service with, he could peruse many more lines of inquiry than he could when he was blackmailing him. As an added bonus, he would no longer have to answer so many probing questions about the morality of threatening people to get what he wanted.

OoooO

Stark had arrived in Asgard so early this morning that Loki had still been sleeping when he'd crept into Loki's chambers, almost complete disrobed and crawled under the furs and started kissing him.

Loki had been still more than half asleep when Stark had chivied him into the bathroom to answer nature's call and supervised an abbreviated morning ablution, keeping him there while either the servants or guards quickly set up Stark's surprise. Loki wasn't sure which, they just indicated they were finished by smartly rapping on the bathroom door before leaving.

"What in *Valhalla* are you going on about, Stark," Loki mumbled, still not fully awake. Sitting on a small bathing bench and looking nothing like his usual smooth self, he yawned, peering up from underneath his bed rumpled hair that Stark was idly playing with.

“You know, we still have an exercise to do.”

Loki rolled his eyes dramatically. Stark was determinedly blasting through their recommended couples activity list as if there was a prize for early completion.

Which perhaps in a way there was, if they both reacted better to each other?

Loki’s acknowledging humm was not disagreeing, but not entirely happy either.

“Well, it was my turn to pick one,” Stark reminded him, combing the disheveled locks through his fingers, a process that was not made any easier by Loki leaning against him. “So I figured we’d get started early, and knock the damn thing out by lunch time so we could enjoy the rest of our time.”

Stark was able to finger comb his unruly hair to some semblance of order by the time a sharp knock sounded on the bathing suite door. That apparently being a signal of some sort since the mortal patted his hair one last time before declaring, “There, all done.”

“We’ll make a ladies maid out of you yet.” Loki drawled, sitting upright with a yawn so he could stretch.

“Yeah. Yeah. Very funny, asshole,” He handed Loki a black folded cloth band. “Before we go out, you need to put this on.”

While he might privately admit that Schafer and Rozmon had been able to give him some insights on how much his holding onto his resentment towards his ex-family and Asgard was actually hurting him rather than them, he still didn’t like his sessions. Yes, fine. He learned why Stark was so often oblivious to how his actions affected others and things of that nature. But for every examination into the flaws and failings of others, he had also had to face his own flaws and failings. And also acknowledge, even if he refused to admit it out loud, how his actions in the past had exacerbated certain situations, sometimes catastrophically. Every session with them exhausted him to the point where he sometimes questioned if he even wanted to go to Midgard. Not that he could even completely escape them in Asgard, what with their insistence on he and Stark doing relationship exercises on the months Stark came to Asgard.

OoooO

“I am not assembling anything you give instructions for, Stark,” Loki growled, glaring at the offending piece of cloth before he lifted it to his face.

That had been a disaster.

Loki recalled looking at the broken down pieces of toys scattered on an impromptu bed-table, and remembering how he has seen ‘Blind Fold Assembly’ as one of the communication exercises on their activities list. Of course his maniac mechanical mortal would pick that.

"I found these," Stark had hefted a clear bag filled with several different brightly colored toys, “on my way back from Munich last week, Pep let me take a last minute spin of the gift shops as a reward for not tormenting the conference reporters. I’m actually excited to see how they assemble.” He pointed a mockingly accusing finger at Loki, “You, grumpy god, can call me childish all you want. But I’m telling you this is going to be fun.”

Mortals had a saying about how, ‘Famous last words’, always came back to bite one in the ass.

What they learned during the exercise, was that no matter how brilliant his pretty little genius was, he was not able to give clear directions to save his life. And it had *almost* cost him his life. Loki

had gone first and was easily able to talk Stark through the assembly for one of the toys that were part of the exercise. However, when it was Stark's turn, it had quickly turned into a shouting match that almost instantly turned his brilliant mortal to a screaming toddler. He was incensed that Loki could not follow what he claimed were perfectly clear instructions, his implication being of course that the fault laid with Loki rather than the quality of the instructions. They were still *discussing* it quite loudly when Frigga stopped in to greet Stark before dinner. While he had rolled his eyes, Tony showed her the bags of different toys and complained that Loki didn't know how to take instruction.

"Imagine that, huh? Loki not listening to someone? Big surprise there, huh?" Tony sniped so annoyingly that it was only the presence of the queen that kept Loki from tripping the annoying bastard into the nearest wall as he flounced around the room. Frigga, fascinated by the toys, had asked if she could have them since they were obviously done with them. As neither Tony nor Loki could wait to see the last of the blasted things, they were happy to give them to her, at least, until they saw what she intended to do with them. Frigga had used a replicator so she had five copies of each toy and the layout sheet that belonged to it. After dinner, *all* of them, including *Odin* and *Iðunn*, put on blindfolds while the 'instructor' laid identical parts on identical layout sheets and then proceeded to give them instructions on how to assemble the toy.

The activity was not without its moments; Thor was, as expected, the worst at listening to instructions. Annoyingly, Odin was very good at giving them. However, between Stark and Loki, Loki was a much better instructor. Despite Stark's best efforts, no one was able to correctly assemble from his directions, since he either glossed over steps or tried to combine them. Needless to say the mortal was incredibly cranky and sulked all the way back to his suite. Truth be told, Loki had been cranky too, with only one day to see Stark, having him sulk when they could be having sex while Stark lavished him with devotion was not something Loki was looking forward to. Fortunately, Loki proposed an activity that Stark was much better at giving instructions for, and the rest of the evening passed off quite enjoyably, it seemed Stark the playboy was much better at issuing instructions than Stark the engineer was.

"Christ, no," Stark agreed fervently, pulling Loki's attention back to the present. He could almost see Stark shudder at the thought of doing that exercise again. "Actually, Rudolf, we are doing trust exercises today, and I get to go first and after that, I have some nifty sight blocking sunglasses to put on so you can guide me around the palace for an hour. And hopefully not forget to warn me to step up this time."

Sliding a hand around Loki's arm, much in the same manner that Loki would use later, Stark guided him back into the bedroom and had him sit up against the headboard with a pile of pillows behind him. "Hands at your side please, they don't move." He instructed before Loki felt him hopping off the bed and could hear a several small clinking noises, a soft popping sound, and the scrape of something being set on the night stand before Stark returned to kneel beside him on the bed.

"Missed you," Stark murmured as his fingers combed back a few tendrils of hair that had fallen across Loki's forehead before fumbling the tie of his robe open. A thin glass gently bumped Loki's lower lip. The liquid in it was cold and it was sweet and the bubbles tickled Loki's nose. *Champagne*. He could hear Stark taking a sip and then setting the glass down. Stark teased his mouth open with sweet champagne coated fingers before popping a small piece of smooth milk chocolate on his tongue and pushing up on Loki's chin so he could spend several long moments licking the champagne from his lips before demanding entry to chase the now melted chocolate.

"Sweet." Loki sighed, leaning into the arm Tony had snaked around his shoulders and nibbling at the tart cherry being held to his lips. Frankly, he wasn't sure he could think of a better way to

spend their first anniversary than by having Stark shower him with delectable treats. Unless it would have been to omit the blindfold so he could see Stark's magnificently expressive eyes as he worshipped '*my god*'. A phrase that Loki had several times heard Stark muttering in his sleep or screaming out in ecstasy. Just the thought of it had Loki's lips curling into a smile, which caused a bit of juice to drip onto his chin and chest. Juice Stark promptly licked from his chin before taking care of the juice on his chest, pausing of course to swirl his tongue a few times around the areola of Loki's nipple before nipping him right below it with his strong, sharp teeth.

While arching his back to encourage Stark to linger even after the juice had been taken care of, Loki wound his own arm around Stark's waist, his hand resting right about where his name was tattooed on the man's back, while his other hand cradled the back of Stark's head encouraging him to suckle a bit more. Not that Stark needed much encouragement; Loki felt the half eaten cherry circle his nipple several times before Stark leaned in to lick up the mess he had just caused.

His own hand had drifted much lower and was stroking and kneading Stark's ass, when his nipple was released with a loud pop.

"Okay, you can keep the hand petting my ass where it is, 'cause I do like that, but this one," Stark's somehow fruit free hand pushed on his wrist, moving Loki's hand from his hair and settling it again on the sheet beside him. "This one needs to stay right here."

Loki made a small noise of displeasure, but decided, for now that he would leave his hand where it had been placed.

"I need to trust you to listen to me sometimes," Stark told him, "just like you need to trust me not to slip up and feed you any of these habanera dill pickles I've got here."

Something repellent smelling was briefly waved under Loki's nose.

Loki wrinkled his nose. "Surely not, Stark." Why the man was so determined to find a type of pickle Loki would eat, he had no clue. There was no way in Helheim that a fermented cucumber would ever appeal to him, no matter what kind of spices they used.

"Yep, and some blue cheese too." Loki could feel his face scrunching up in distaste. He was well traveled within the Nine Realms and without, and he knew there were few things that tasted or smelled worse than blue cheese. The substance was absolutely vile.

"Which, I should totally feed you as payback for giving Darcy that damn tote bag that keeps trying to bite me." Tony continued sternly. However, even without seeing him, Loki could tell from his tone that he was equal parts amused and annoyed that part of Darcy's private assistant gear included a carry all bag with the same teeth and temperament as the Care of Magical Creatures book from the Harry Potter films. Upon which Loki had based it, not that he would have admitted that to Stark.

Shifting against Stark's chest, Loki rested his head into the crook of Stark's neck and breathed, "Do not meddle in what does not concern you, and the bag will not try to bite you."

"And if I meddle with you, will you try to bite me?" Stark teased, running something cold and sweet against Loki's lower lip before licking it off.

"Well... I am hungr--" Loki broke off with a moan when a small, crispy ball of autumn melon was popped into his mouth. Autumn melon was indeed worthy of a few undignified noises... Including the ones Stark made as Loki sucked on his fingers to get the rest of the juice off them.

Prohibitively expensive, even on Álfheimr, the fruit did not travel well and was incredibly difficult even for the palace to get. But, by the Nine, it was exquisite. And Loki thought smugly, he was worth it. To Stark, at least. A little voice in his head mentioned in passing how upset the head Steward must have been when Stark's emissary outbid the palace for such a rare treat.

Taking advantage of his momentarily distraction, the arm Stark had wrapped around his shoulder slid down his back to nestle under Loki's own backside.

"Happy Anniversary," Tony murmured into his ear, while Loki almost purring with contentment, snuggled closer, opening his mouth, waiting. Stark smeared sweet cream on Loki's lips before placing a crème glazed raspberry on his tongue. Rich mixed with tart while Stark's lips, lapped up the cream he had smeared on Loki's lips. That coupled with Stark's clever fingers ghosting over the front of thin boxers made arousal curl in within him until he couldn't help but groan.

In his heart of hearts, Loki often felt that he should never have agreed to this, but *Sweet Valhalla*, it was good to be able to experience fine things again, and to have the freedom to enjoy them, however briefly. And Stark was not horrible, quite the reverse actually. The man was spoiled perhaps, but certainly not any more so than Loki himself had been not long ago. And he would be again, as soon as Asgard's claim on him was satisfied. After all, Stark was determined that it should be so.

And if Stark wanted a pampered darling? Well, Loki was surely not going to deny him one. Not perhaps a role he felt he could support over the long term perhaps, but for right now? Loki frankly thought he could do with a little pampering. He'd not been fussed over and cosseted like this since he'd been a youngling. Better, even as a youngling, people had still expected him to behave. Stark liked when he was petulant, he enjoyed caroling Loki into a better mood. His default term of public endearment for Loki was 'Brat'. And so long as Loki didn't turn his inner brat on Stark too much, Stark could care less who else he targeted. Not even if it was Odin himself.

Loki certainly saw no reason his mortal should not be allowed to have a willful brat that he could indulge when ever he wanted.

Provided, of course, that what Stark wanted was something Loki wanted him to have.

Chapter End Notes

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.
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*******TRIGGER WARNINGS** – This chapter will ***HAVE*** - Numerous intimate body parts mentioned, M/M Pre-Sex. If these are a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please **DO NOT READ** if you have issues with any of these items.*****

Time Passages – Let's take a drive

Chapter Summary

Tony solves his 'Instruction Giving Impairment' using SCIENCE. Fine, fine, he hacked a video game and married it to some custom hardware. But he did build it, so he gets credit right?

Chapter Notes

Beta'd with many suggestions by the wonderful Stella.

I imagine we will have perhaps three more 'passage' chapters before the next segment. My thoughts were to see how a 'normal' relation progressed between these two, since they aren't all sunshine and angst with nothing in between.

Is this something you guys enjoy? Or should I just forget this crap and dive right into the next segment which is pretty much finished. Let me know what you think.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 30 – Time Passages – Let's take a drive

With the driving simulator Tony had cobbled together for Loki to practice on while in Asgard and his own natural ability, it didn't take long for Loki to learn how to drive. The Lincoln, thank heavens, not the Olds 88. In fact, the hardest part about actual on street practicing was sneaking out of the building without taking any of Loki's Vanir guards. Fortunately, after the guards swept the penthouse for threats, they could be ordered to stay in the kitchen and foyer area unless called for. This left Tony and Loki free to take one of the secret emergency escape routes to a lower level so they could access Tony's private elevator without being seen and head down to the garage.

After getting them through the Holland tunnel, "No offense, Lo, but you aren't ready for downtown at rush hour," Tony turned the car over to Loki for actual practice in an almost empty section of Target's parking lot. After about thirty minutes, they left there to meander through the more populated section of the lot. After maybe another half hour, Tony declared that the increasingly bored god could finally start roaming the streets of Jersey City and pit his new skills against suburban traffic.

After the god had successfully evaded several possible fender benders caused by careless drivers or his own hesitancy, Tony declared he needed some coffee and Loki needed to learn to parallel park in real life. So, they stopped at the Milk Sugar Love Creamery on McWilliams Place. Jarvis said the place had gotten good reviews, but more importantly, there were some open spaces in front of the place for Loki's first attempt at parking in the wild.

Tony **did not** laugh. He wanted to, mind you, but he didn't.

Arm over the back seat, head craned around to look behind him since he didn't trust the rear view

mirror, Loki was not a happy camper. “I am one of the few people in the Nine Realms that can traverse Yggdrasill, not only by myself, but leading a party consisting of that oaf Thor and his bumbling companions without them even knowing it.” He hissed irritably as he pulled back out to try again.

Tony noticed how flushed his normally pale face was getting.

“I can pilot a scout ship better than Commander Arnþórsson!” His god growled.

But sadly, after four attempts Loki could still not park something made in Michigan.

“I know, Lo,” Tony said meekly, not wanting to make the task any harder by laughing at his already stressed god. But inside? Inside Tony was dying with laughter. So much so that he had to take several deep breaths and bite the inside of cheek to keep from howling.

“Þú ert minna en að haug af skit!” Loki growled, smacking the steering wheel so hard it had to have hurt him. “I would be able to perform this simple parking maneuver if this damn conveyance of yours wasn’t defective, Stark!”

As cute as Loki looked, all flustered and flushed. Tony could see that they weren’t too far from either a godly meltdown or someone bringing out the magic. Neither of which were a good idea right now. Or at any time really. So maybe it was time for Loki to step away a moment.

“You might be right, Lo. Look, just go in there, grab us a table, and be a little Asgardian ball of sunshine while I check to see what might be wrong with this thing.”

Nostrils flaring, Loki’s head snapped around at something just under the speed of light, his narrowed eyes searching closely to see if Tony was mocking him. Perhaps Tony was successful at keeping the amusement out of his face. Or perhaps more likely, Loki decided to take the graceful way out. Whichever one it was, he flung himself out of the car, leaving the door open, in traffic, and stalked his fine looking ass into the ice cream shop without looking back.

Three scoops of Earl Grey Fudge and two snicker doodle cookies later, Loki was calm enough to ask if Tony had found anything wrong with that wretched conveyance of his.

Tony just smiled, took another sip of his coffee and snagged a cookie from the plate in the middle of the small table without saying anything.

Self preservation, Doctor Rozmon would be so proud.

“I suppose it will take much more practice to learn to park,” Loki muttered finally, staring out the window at the perfectly parked vehicle while breaking the last cookie into a pile of crumbs. After a moment, his eyes slid sideways and met Tony’s.

Holy... Tony was amazed and amused by his godling, being so reasonable and calm in face of an apparent failure, a small failure, but still. Fuck. That therapy shit might actually be working. Who knew?

Gesturing to see if Loki was indeed finished, Tony sat down his nearly empty cup and they stood up. “Buck up, Lo.” Tony told him playfully while throwing a nice tip down on the table. “I’m sure you’ll find plenty of opportunities to laugh and mock me when I screw up in one of your flying long boats.”

“Oh, you can be sure that I will, Stark,” The god smirked, his good humor apparently restored enough that he was willing to continue his driving lesson as long as it didn’t involve anymore

parallel parking.

Consulting his phone, Tony decided to call out directions so Loki could practice changing lanes and making turns when he actually needed to, rather than when traffic allowed him to.

Truth be told, he wasn't doing that bad, Tony thought. Once he and the car came to an understanding of how it should be handled, Loki drove smoothly and made excellent use of his reflexes. He didn't even panic when the much dented car in front of them slammed on their brakes.

"Those, you want to watch," Tony warned him as they continued down the next street. "Newish car? Lots of damage? They flat can't drive. Keep an eye on them. Oh, lots of room here, just pull over and park a moment, I want to check something out."

Making sure not to hit the curb, Loki pulled over without really looking to see where they were stopping. He was too busy making sure he put the car properly in park and correctly shut it off. So busy he didn't notice Tony watching him with an expectant expression on his face.

Removing the key, Loki looked first at Tony and then at the dashboard. "Am I not far enough out of the path of traffic?" He asked concerned, peering out his window. "Did I not get close enough to the pedestrian way?"

"No. I mean yes. You did fine, you're really catching on."

"Then what exactly is the problem, Stark?" Loki asked testily.

"You know what. I don't know," Tony admitted ruefully while opening his door. *This was totally not a lie, so extra points for him for honest communication*, he thought preening. Too much more of this and he was going to have to get an app that would create milestone spreadsheets for his private shrink sessions.

"Well, come on, let's go." Tony said, getting out of the car. Loki followed, pausing to make sure the car doors were properly locked. He tucked the key in his jacket pocket and then trailed Tony several steps down the sidewalk before he took in their surroundings and jerked to a stop.

Noticing that the steps behind him had come to a halt, Tony turned with a smirk, hands buried in his hoodie pocket, he looked over his sunglasses at the god. His suddenly hostile god he noted with amusement. Tony had been looking forward to this little outing since he'd found out about this over a month ago. "Well, are you coming or what?" He asked with mock impatience.

"Why are we here, Stark?" Loki asked, his tone was flat and his eyes were a cross between angry and wary as he tilted his head back and looked menacingly down at Tony.

"Hey. No need to get all pissy. I just want to see this evil lair you bought." Tony said gesturing towards the two story, cream colored brick house a few more steps away.

As evil lairs went, Tony would be the first to admit that this house would definitely fly under the radar of most searches. You just didn't expect to find super villains in walk-ups with two porches and a one car basement garage. Perhaps it was the pattern of the decorative red brick accents and the greenish black wrought iron porch rails in a family neighborhood, but the place did not exactly scream *Fortress of Evil*.

"Humf, hardly that." Loki scoffed, catching up with Tony and sliding past him without even a glance his way.

"So it's not an evil lair?" Tony asked, standing at the bottom of the stairs looking up at the first

floor porch. “A pied-à-terre, perhaps?” Apparently, from the bemused look Tony was getting, All Speak was providing Loki with the literal rather than the cultural connotation for that term. Tony smirked at his bewilderment. “Pied-à-terre, a secret place used to meet or house your mistress?”

“Jarvis wasn’t supposed to tell you.”

“He didn’t. A very thorough clerk at my accountant's office found it when he did a records check to make sure there were no outstanding property taxes in my name. Not knowing all your circumstances, he apparently decided to check your Earthgard name too, and appended this property to the file.”

The outraged expression on Loki’s face, at what he obviously thought was sheer meddling on the part of some nameless clerk was priceless. Loki irritably started up the cement stairs to the main level porch. “I’m having him promoted,” Tony sing songed, not even bothering to hide his smile at start and poisonous glare tossed back at him as that tid-bit of information received.

Tony stood there for a moment, admiring the house, well, *looking* up at it anyway. It was in Tony’s billionaire opinion a bit of a dump. A passing thought caused Tony to frown slightly, “And no, Brat. You are not going to try to find out who he is and make his life miserable,” Tony admonished. “He was trying to be helpful to *us*.”

Trotting up the stairs, Tony spun around on the decently sized porch which was protected from the weather by the matching cement slap porch above it. “So, is this for when you get tired of me and start taking lovers?” He teased, fairly sure that he knew the actual reason the house had been bought was due to his god’s incessant need to feel that he would have a secure place of refuge in case of trouble.

Loki looked at him askance as Tony bumped against him.

“Yeah. You’re right. No one who has the privilege of sleeping with me would actually do that. What was I thinking?”

"Anyway, I can’t get into the place no matter how I try. And it appears to have security lights that come on at dusk, yet, it isn’t hooked into the electrical meter." He turned a playful eye toward Loki. “Got something you want to share with the class, Snape?”

Chapter End Notes

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.
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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *Fluff and Filler*
- Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic or diabetic. Please DO NOT READ if this will be a problem for you.

Time Passages - Drink from the Cup

Chapter Summary

It is never all sweetness and light between these two.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the most wonderful Stella. With many a helpful suggestion I might add. :D Since I frequently change stuff after she returns it to me... All errors are mine of course.

I'd like to say I am sorry for this chapter... But that would be a lie. I think it is very in character for Tony. And I never thought this arrangement was going to be easy on them.

I am tempted to add a passage or two alluding to Loki's antics in this set to a future chapter. :D

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 31 – Drinking from the cup

It was only his years of experience in dealing with asshole board members that allowed Tony to sit at the table, eating his lunch, as if there was not a one eyed bastard trying his best to ruin Tony's day. He had thought it would be better when he'd gotten their obligatory meal with the not-parents moved from 'when-is-this-shit-going-to-end dinners' to 'everyone-has-stuff-scheduled-this-afternoon lunches'. Because, as a whole, if he had to be in the same room with Odin and, honestly, Frigga, he would rather it be under an hour.

His fixed smiled slipped a moment recalling the events during that shouting match where that change was negotiated. Tony had successfully pointed out to the cranky one eyed man that perhaps certain nosy Asgardians would not have seen him do the naughty with someone who was not the former prince of Asgard, if he and Loki had a little more quality time together. Unconsciously, Tony's fingers lifted and tapped against the gold arc-reactor signet pendent under his shirt. The one Loki had made for him as a result of that little fuckup. Not that he had ever invoked its cloaking powers with anyone but Loki, or had needed to. He hadn't needed to, since just thinking about using it seemed to ground him in a way that worked no matter how drunk, or lonely, or horny, he was.

Or at least, it had *so far*.

Loki's long elegant fingers wrapping around his own, pulling his thoughts away from that dark time, just as they pulled his hand away from the reminder. Glancing over, he smiled reassuringly at the slightly troubled look he was receiving. While, of course, his god saw through Tony's forced smile in a heartbeat, a tiny shake of Tony's head convinced him not to pursue it.

Pushing to get some change during that impromptu screaming match with Odin, Tony had been asking for bi-monthly visits. However, in the end he settled for an extra eight hours and not having to attend a three to four hour feast. Oh, and not being blasted by an irate not-father-in-law's magic pointy-stick. The extra time was at least something and the not-being-killed part was of course a great bonus. But, he hadn't taken into account that during the evening feasts, the other attendees, as annoying as Tony found them, had at least limited the topics of conversations. Well, that, and they were all spread out in a line behind that humongous table and could only talk to the person on either side or across the table from them. Now they were all seated at a more intimate round table and the servants left them alone after placing the food on the table. This meant that Odin All Fucker could use his thirty to forty minutes of listener free time to harangue them on various topics. Today's Topic Du Torture being starting a family.

And Frigga? She just down right pissed him off. She had never, ever even told Odin to shut-the-fuck-up, or leave-the-kids-alone. Hell, no. She'd make one halfhearted attempt to change the subject, and then? Apparently figured her work was done.

While there was no way in Helheim... *Look at him picking up the lingo...* that he or Loki had any intention of doing anything Odin suggested, it did put a damper on their one day together.

Was it any wonder that Tony would sit there with a slight smile on his face? Daydreaming about what would happen if he encased a Jericho Missile with Uhr and shot the bastard with it? Although, much as he hated the idea of listening to anything Odin said about starting a family, there was that one big fat perk that was so hard to ignore...

OoooO

Later that evening when he tried to sound Loki out on the idea, things went downhill in a hurry.

Loki glared at him, sitting on a couch with his leather clad arms folded, a glass of wine ignored on the table beside him. "No, Stark. If you are so set upon having a child, you can go tumble some wench and have one. I'm sure I don't care."

Tony's heart constricted painfully. Loki had to be pretty upset to say such a thing to him. The god was not usually one to harp on the past, unless Tony was being completely clueless. Or... Particularly hurtful. But when it did happen, when Tony was being a totally dick, then Loki could and would hit below the belt. Metaphorically speaking... Ninety percent of the time at least, thank heavens. Still, Tony had been having problems with being emotional lately. He tended to blame the shrinks and all the perfectly buried angst they insisted on digging up. Hell, just thinking about some of the topics that he has had to uncover in the last eighteen months...

Tears stung Tony's eyes. He wasn't going to cry of course, being a hero and all that. And he didn't really think that Loki would be so uncaring if Tony was to actually transfer his affection to someone else. Not really. Still, some days, he did wonder. After all, of all the people who confronted Tony over his little lapses right after their first anniversary, Odin, Frigga, Thor, Pepper and Darcy, Loki had been the calmest.

OoooO

The day Loki had brought the topic up, had been a bad day. Standing in front of the fireplace in

Tony's Asgard living room, his god had been as impeccably dressed as always, in black slacks and matching vest over a blindingly white open-neck shirt. "Oh, come now, Stark. I know you have seen other women while I have been away," Loki had said calmly, holding his hand outstretched. The pendent he offered, dangling from a sturdy gold chain wrapped around those finely shaped fingers, had been incised with Tony's last arc reactor design on both sides. One side was left alone so it could be used as a wax seal, because yes, they did occasionally still use them up here in Viking land. The other side was inlaid with what looked like glittering blue enamel made up of crushed sapphires. "Press your thumb over the blue side for the count of five, hold it up to your lips and tell it to conceal you. Do the same when you are ready to be revealed. I wouldn't recommend leaving it on unnecessarily, you can only use it for about eight hours in total for every twenty-four. When the glow fades, so does the concealment."

When Tony had made no move to take it, Loki had actually reached for his hand and then tipped the damn thing into his palm, closing his fingers around it. "The actual words don't matter of course, it is the intent. You will know it is activated when it starts to glow, which will take a few minutes." Loki's rueful smile didn't quite reflect in his eyes, "I am sorry about that, but it is for the best. I have found it is better to direct sight away from me, rather than just suddenly disappearing. The result is the same, but they don't realize it is occurring."

He felt numb. It wasn't like Tony could deny what had happened. Well, he could, of course, but with all the ways Loki could have found out about him occasionally, *very* occasionally, sleeping around, there really wasn't much sense in trying to lie. And really, it had happened often enough that Tony knew he was courting disaster. With pain beginning to hammer his temples, Tony wondered if he had really even been trying to hide it.

When it came down to it, sometimes he just got lonely. Instead of being better now that he got to spend time with his god monthly, it was getting bone achingly worse. Tony has spent whole weeks stumbling around his tower, unable to concentrate, unable to eat, definitely, unable to sleep. It isn't so much that he occasionally has nightmares. One of them is of being unable to get back to Asgard, where nightmare Tony spends years screaming into the sky for Heimdall, until at last, never knowing what happened, never knowing if his god was even still alive, Tony dies old, broken and alone up on the roof of his tower. Another reoccurring nightmare features him congratulating Loki, looking out proudly at the re-built Bi-Frost. Loki, basking in his accomplishment, turning to him with a proud smile that drains away as the Einherjar seize him at Odin's command and toss him back into the void. His hands reaching out to Tony, Loki's his face twisting in terror at once again being lost in the nothingness that haunts both their dreams. Tony screams, as his god falls, dwindling in the distance, while Thor keeps him from reaching out and claps him jovially on the back telling him not to worry; Loki will doubtless be found by the Chitauri again.

Bad as they are, and they are bad. Heart poundingly, full on sweat, hoarse scream bad. Those occasional nightmares aren't what keeps Tony from trying to sleep. Rather it's the more frequent, sweet dreams of the two of them free to be together without Asgard interfering. Sometimes they are alone, just wrapped up on the couch stealing popcorn and the remote control from each other. Sometimes Tony dreams of Loki watching indulgently from a nearby shade lounger, while he and a small boy, who has Loki's smile, are playing on the beach. And he wakes up so fucking happy that when the reality of the empty space beside him and the empty room down the hall hits him, it leaves Tony feeling like he has just had another hole ripped in his chest. A remembrance of pain of which he doesn't like reliving several times a week.

And that feeling of loneliness stays with him for days, until Tony is desperate to feel something besides emptiness and despair. And wasn't there always some hot chick wanting to help forget it all for just a few hours, hoping that she could become the next Mrs. Stark, not understanding that there really wasn't a divorce clause in his contract with Loki and Asgard? Not that all of them

would even stop if they knew that, since if you couldn't be the wife, being the official mistress of a billionaire who only sees his off planet spouse one day a month would also be a pretty sweet deal. Tony's folded up hand trembled slightly as Loki's released it.

Not that there was really any possibility of the official mistress thing happening either.

Sighing, Tony finally pulled his hand away and opened it. Staring at the damn pendant, not so much because he wanted to look at it, but more that he didn't want to meet Loki's tired green eyes. It wasn't like Tony ever went out looking for a hook up; it was just that sometimes he was too damn weak, drunk or lonely to refuse. And somehow, he doesn't know how because it really doesn't make any sense, he convinced himself in his fucked up head that if he never slept with a guy, then it wasn't so bad... And besides, didn't he used to go trolling for women with Loki?

"Why?" Tony asked, clenching his fist and holding it against his chest before looking up. Loki still didn't seem mad, or even sad, just rather resigned.

And fuck if Tony didn't hate the way Loki's lips tightened, and then curled up in a resigned grimace. He hated how Loki just stood there, not saying anything. Not screaming, not even giving him a dirty look. Fuck knows Tony deserves screaming at the very least. Even his hind brain, which is relieved that no magical attacks seem to be in his immediate future, admits that. However, Loki still doesn't say anything, doesn't glare. Nothing. And that might be what hurts the most. Like Loki doesn't even care maybe, like it isn't important, what Tony does when he's on Earth all alone.

And because Tony is a worthless cheating piece of shit, doesn't that just flip his mood and make him defensive and belligerent. "Look. I was fucking lonely. Okay?"

Oh crap, his voice cracked.

Impossibly, Loki's lips thinned even more, the smile that isn't really smile still fixed upon his face. "I understand you have needs, Stark."

Still not mad, not accusing, just so *fucking* resigned that Tony has to scream because someone needs to be screaming. And if it isn't going to be Loki, then by damned, it's gonna be him.

"No!"

"*NO!*"

"***NO!*** You *don't* understand **SHIT.**"

His fist tightened so much that the small pendant cut painfully into his palm despite being round. Tony slammed his chest with it. "You might be a god damn genius, Mister Wizard, but you don't know *squat* about this! I said I was fucking **lonely**, not horny!"

The weight of all the times he'd caught himself trying to make a call, that crushing feeling of loneliness in the split second before he remembered that there was no cell service to Asgard. That no matter what he'd wanted to share, it was going to have to wait a week, or two, or ultimately just get briefly mentioned in a voice message that evening, if he even remembered it by then, caused Tony's shoulders to sag. "I *do* know the difference. After all these damn years..." his voice trailed off to a hoarse whisper. "I *know* the difference..."

And then, of course, to Tony's complete and utter humiliation, a big fat tear rolled down his cheek. Angrily, he dashed it away. Gesturing with his now tear streaked fist, a loop of escaped chain

swinging wildly, he demanded bitterly, “Why?”

“It fixes a problem.” Loki said, ignoring Tony’s caustic laugh as if it was the most perfectly understandable thing in the world. “This way, when next you stray, we won’t have to worry about all the snoops of Asgard being aware of it.”

Loki’s tone was lighter and made a dismissive gesture as if speaking of a matter that wasn’t really that important, “I was not the one who saw, but it didn’t take a genius to figure out it was going to happen eventually.” He waved his hand gracefully, and finally a real smile tinged with not a small bit of pride, stole across his face, “That will not only shield you from them, the casual snoops, but also Heimdall and the All Father.” Loki’s nose twitched in black humor. “I would make sure the drapes are drawn though, otherwise those damn birds could still be a problem.”

Swaying so bad he was barely able to stand, Tony fumbled a moment, trying to shove the damn pendant into his pocket before he stepped forward reaching out.

Tony voice came out like a croak, “Loki.”

“Please don’t.”

It was Loki’s voice, now drained of even that small bit of dark humor, more than the hand he held up, that caused Tony to come to an instant stop. Gritting his teeth, his hands dropped to his side, despite the fierce ache in his chest and the longing to just fucking be held. Loki held his ground, but Tony could tell he would have rather taken a step back.

“I was *lonely*, okay. I shouldn’t have done it, but--”

“Sometimes you needed to hold and be held. I understand *perfectly*, Stark.”

“You’re not mad?”

“*I didn’t say that.*” Loki snapped, his expression fracturing for the tiniest space of time, so wrecked that Tony flinched.

Recovering quickly, Loki looked at him searchingly for several long moments, and apparently not liking what he saw in the man standing before him, he let out a long sigh.

“Come,” Loki commanded, opening his arms.

Tony took him up on his offer at about twice the speed of light.

“There are a few things you can be assured of when you live a long life, Stark,” Loki whispered into his hair as he tightened warm arms around Tony. “One is that you will make mistakes, be rash and hurt other people.” Lifting his chin, so Tony could bury his face against his neck Loki took a deep breath before continuing, “The other thing you can count on, and I know this well, is there will always be retribution for your stupidity.” There was a long pause, broken only up by a few suspicious sniffs that Tony couldn’t mask.

Finally Loki continued in that same weary voice. “The only advice I can give you is to make sure that you always refill the cup of forgiveness that you expect others to let you drink from.”

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* -
mentions of Infidelity. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing
horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on
that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these
items.*****

Time Passages - Revisiting a subject

Chapter Summary

Honestly Stark. Just give it a rest why don't you? There is a fine line between being persistent and being a pain in the ass. Good luck getting Tony to see it that way.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the very helpful Stella. :D Since I frequently change stuff after she returns it to me... All errors are mine of course.

It has been mentioned that this section is getting all 'adult' and 'serious', which I do not disagree with. I will say that the next chapter will be lighter... and the last Time Passages section.

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 32 - Revisiting a subject

The day Loki confronted him about cheating had been a bad for all concerned. And six months later, he was still having to re-hash the 'why-fors' in his therapy sessions, Loki having ratted him out immediately with the shrinks. And it wasn't like Tony wouldn't have told the Crane Brothers himself.

Eventually.

And could he just say for the record, he felt really, really bad that the cheating thing had happened. And he hoped like hell it'd never happened again.

Even so, by any logical reason you could think of, baring it possibly being the only way short of murder to shut up that cranky old one-eyed bastard on the throne, it was way too early for them to be thinking about starting a family. Even if that whole cheating thing hadn't happened, which unfortunately it did, Odin's impatience was way on the pushy side for a mortal time line let alone an Asgardian one.

However, even if you threw logic out the window and Loki somehow decided now was the time to have kids, how in the hell would that even work? Would Loki want to go through it female, because that form is probably set up the best for it? Or looking outwardly male because he was more used to his male form? Or rather male with a few Jotun kid bearing additions? Additions which, for the record, Tony has rarely actually seen. In fact, he has only three times managed to even cop a quick feel any lower than the joystick area before Loki latched onto the closest part of his body with very sharp teeth and the intent to remove meaty chunks.

There was no way that Loki hadn't been a biter when he was a kid.

Admittedly, at first, it had been because Loki was fucking freaked about it, which anyone would be. Waking up as a regular guy and going to bed with an added vag? *Seriously freaky*. Particularly if you didn't even know it was possible. Now, however, the bastard just teases him with it. Hell, the closest he'd ever come was one night when he had Loki so bothered and lathered up that he'd hadn't even noticed that Tony was no longer stroking on the outside of his those briefs of his, but had slipped a hand inside. Not that *that* was going to happen again anytime soon. Now, Loki has more pairs of low-rise spandex boxer briefs than a department store, and he put some sort of voodoo spell on them so Tony can't even slip a finger under them. Open the buttons in the front and let stuff out? Yeah, that can happen. Slip a hand in there when Loki is too far gone to pay attention? Nope, not happening, no matter how hard he tries.

Tony really hates magic.

And the Berserker cuffs from their wedding night? Before Tony could even give them back, the bastard had already made it so that he doesn't need them. Tony isn't sure what Loki did to their headboards, but now he just waves his hand or mumbles something, Tony's not sure which, and suddenly, Tony can't keep his hands off it. Oh, he can move his hands up and down the headboard, and from side to side, and hang on the edge, and stuff like that. But once Loki invokes whatever it is he does, at least one fingertip on each Tony's hand has to touch the headboard.

So yeah, Tony really hates magic, when it is used against him. He's just lucky Loki only pulls that stunt when it's his turn to own Tony's ass. Tony refuses to believe that it is coincidental that this is the only time Loki stays male once they move on to the main event.

Of course, since Mrs. O had cornered him that day Loki was out dealing with an construction emergency and made him flip through a book on Jotuns, Tony has wondered if Loki would have to go full on Jotun to carry a baby. If so, he could totally understand Lo not wanting any parts of it. Even if he stayed relatively the same size he was now, Tony just couldn't see the, frankly, *vain* Loki going full on bald smurf on top of whatever indignity he felt about having to become pregnant.

So, however you looked at it, the whole idea was laughably unthinkable, no matter what Odin thought. Except Tony couldn't help thinking of it sometimes. One small child and Loki would be out from under a lot of the crap he had to put up with on Asgard and free to spend more time with Tony. And as alluring as that prospect was, he had to admit that the nocturnal visits from the small boy with his eyes and Loki's smile was starting to make him wish Lo would at least consider it.

OoooO

The privacy of Tony's Asgardian balcony, such as was available on Asgard was provided by the fluttering twenty foot long curtains that ringed the space. It was very late, or very early, depending on how you wanted to look at it. They had already had several very vigorous rounds of sex, the last one being in the small pool that the Asgardians considered to be a soaking tub. And now they were entwined barely dressed, Loki a pair of his annoying magic briefs hugging his ass and leaving nothing to the imagination in front, and Tony favoring the more traditional post-coital apparel of a towel loosely wrapped around his hips. Neither of them was quite ready to end their evening just yet, which is how they ended up out here on a couple's lounge, sipping the champagne he'd brought with him, and watching the stars swirl above them.

Tony, who had about twenty minutes ago decided that the view beside him was more fascinating than the one above, set his almost empty glass on the small side table, and asked, "So, you don't like kids?"

“What?” Amazed, Loki turned his head to give Tony a what-the-hell-brought-that-on look.

If you put a gun to his head, or something more likely in Loki’s case, a dagger to this throat, Tony couldn’t tell you why he just asked that question. Except for the fact that after over a year of it coming up every other month in some form or another in Asgard, he still didn’t know how Loki felt about the topic in the long run. The entire topic being studiously ignored by Loki, who also declared it verboten in their joint sessions. On Tony’s side, the Crane brothers were finding it increasingly hard to get him off the topic during his personal sessions and he was beginning to worry that they might soon resort to using a baseball bat to get him to change subjects. But hey, once a question comes up, Tony wants... No. Tony *needs* an answer before he could move on.

“Of course I like children.” Loki scoffed, holding his glass out imperiously for Tony to refill.

“Other than me, you would be hard pressed to find a more concentrated source of mischief and chaos than your average child. And that is my domain after all, mischief, chaos and fire.”

Tony frowned at that last bit but then was, distracted for an instant by the long, lean line of Loki’s throat as he drank; with effort he determinedly flicked his gaze back to Loki’s face. “Okay. You know, I not sure how that last one fits in...” Then it hit him like a bolt from Thor’s hammer.

“Oh fuck.”

“Eloquent as always, Stark,” Loki deadpanned with a modified eye roll, shifting so he faced Tony, he raised his glass in a mocking salute. “Yes, children are fascinated by fire. You do realize that there are no other gods in any pantheon devoted specifically to children once they have been safely born?”

“So... you are like the default god of kids?”

“Can you think of anyone better suited to children and childhood than a Trickster god?” And when Loki put it that way, honestly, Tony couldn’t. Your average child was a walking, talking, small scale embodiment of uncontrollable misbehavior, and random events. Tony could easily see where Loki was if not their god, then at least their patron.

If only they knew it.

“But you don’t like the idea of having your own kid?”

Not that Tony had really thought that Loki ‘disliked’ children, but there was a difference between liking kids and wanting one of your own after all. And Loki had never mentioned them, or had seemed drawn to them at any time that Tony could think of. Outside of Sleipnir that was, who Tony had finally met, and who was pretty okay for a horse. Loki’s other children of myth, were actually friends or familiars that Thor and his group had drunkenly rambled on about during their visits to earth. Tales which had over the generations they were told, gotten confused with Sleipnir’s story.

Brow’s furrowing, Loki stared at him a moment in very un-Loki like confusion, he had obviously only been paying partial attention to their conversation. “*Not* like... What are you on about, Stark?” It only took a second, but he could tell when Loki’s eyes narrowed and his lips thinning into a hard line was exactly when his god had figured out what Tony was ‘going on about’.

“Stark, are we back to *that* topic again?” Loki demanded.

“Funny thing,” Tony said in a breezy up-tempo voice, totally ignoring the warning signs in his partner’s tone and expression. “We never really have hashed this one out.” Loki’s nostrils flared

and then he flung himself from the lounge, slamming down his glass on the side table so hard it was a wonder it didn't break and then stalked into the bedroom.

"Aw, come on!" Tony whined, hurriedly following after him. "We really need to, just so we don't have to keep coming back to it."

"We don't," Loki spat wrathfully, shrugging on a light robe while heading towards the bathroom, apparently in an attempt to be out-of-sight-out-of-mind. Not that something like that had even a remote chance of working when Tony had latched onto a topic.

"No, we really do," Tony protested. "If only so I'll know how to play this when your dickhead father--"

Loki whirled, glowing hand upraised, glaring wrathfully down at Tony. "Not-father," Tony corrected quickly, raising his hands up in supplication. He was bummed that their evening was heading downhill this fast, but determined to, at least this time, get to the damn question decided once and for all.

Loki hissed, "Just drop it, Stark."

And honestly, there was a part of Tony that did just want to drop the subject. Because while he would be the last to argue against the statement that his god could be a diva, he did have to admit it was never because you pushed a button. You pretty much had to rake your hand across the whole damn control panel to get Loki to lose his shit. Unfortunately, that is what this topic was for the god. No matter when or how you approached it, there was no way not to push Loki's last button or get on his last nerve. And still never get a fricken straight answer.

Okay, so Loki was not happy with the idea. He got that. But it was the 'why' of it all the engineer in him needed to understand.

So, no. 'Dropping it' was not one of Tony's options.

"I'd like to Lo. Honestly I would, but I just really want to know, it's making me crazy." Tony stopped right before the archway leading from the balcony to the bedroom, keeping a close eye on the green haze surrounding Loki's up-raised hand. If it intensified at all, he was ready to whip sideways putting a nice solid wall between him and any pissy spell heading his way. The last time he had really pissed his god off, it had taken Tony hours to convince Loki that, all curiosity aside, cat ears and a tail was not a good look for him.

"Yes, no, or maybe, I don't care which, but *why* it's yes, no, or maybe? That I gotta know."

"Liar." Loki hissed, puffing up worse than Thor having a bad hair day.

Not that Tony really wanted any kids. Not really, or rather not if Loki didn't. However, he had to admit he was more than willing to put up with one if it got Asgard off Loki's back. Which admittedly was a shitty reason to have a kid, but hell he was getting just that tired of Asgard's shit. And besides, he kept dreaming about that little boy, not that he had mentioned that to anyone.

"I know I said we should at least consider it, and you know why I think we should. But if you say no kid, we'll drop the idea, okay? But Lo, you gotta tell me why."

"You know why we shouldn't, Stark."

"Yeah. But I don't know why you think we shouldn't." Tony retorted for what he would be willing to swear was the fiftieth time.

Thunderous expression in place, hands clenched, Loki started pacing back and forth, his robe billowing out behind him like the lashing tail of a cat. After a few turns of the room, he stopped fixing murderously flashing eyes on Tony.

“I will not,” Loki snarled, stabbing an index finger viciously in Tony’s direction. *“Someday have a child of my body screaming at me in pain because of some malicious backstabbing Æsir,”* That last word being spat at Tony with such loathing it was like a deadly curse, *“decided to break my child’s heart by telling them, quite truthfully, that they were conceived as a ruse and solely so I could escape the All Father’s punishment!”*

Tony was torn between backing around the edge of the archway to safety and trying to get closer so he could comfort an obviously increasingly worked up god.

“Do you understand I will never do that?!” Loki screamed, his normally pale face almost purple with rage and so mad he was shaking.

Honestly, this was not an answer Tony had imagined. He had thought of lots of reasons that Loki might have balked at the idea of having a kid. None of them, in his opinion, had outweighed the benefit of getting out from under four hundred plus years of a prison term. Tony’s inner guy shuddered. Well, except maybe for the whole *I’m-a-guy-I-don’t-ever-want-to-get-pregnant-part*. *That* one he would have totally understood. But apparently, *that* wasn’t the deciding factor, nor was it *my-husband-is-an-unfaithful-dick*, *we’re-not-ready*, *I’m-too-young-to-settle-down*, *fuck-Odin-and-Frigga-let-Thor-give-them-a-grandkid*, etcetera, etcetera.

“Now, Stark, do you understand enough that we don’t have to continually revisit this subject?” Loki ground out through clenched teeth.

Glaring down at Tony as he approached him, Loki’s expression was almost daring Tony to utter one more word about how the benefits of them reducing Loki’s prison sentence outweighed the risks of having a child that might someday hate them for conceiving it for that reason.

Something Tony had no intention of even trying. Hesitantly wrapping his arms around the angry god, it took several long minutes before Loki would allow Tony to tug him over to the couch and sit down. And perhaps a bit longer before he could get Loki to even start letting go of his anger. But eventually, Tony was able to lean back with his knee against the back of the couch, pulling Loki on top of him as they semi-reclined against the overstuffed arm. Loki’s one hand twined so tightly in his that he might have broken bones had Tony been not had extremis and Æsir enhanced strength.

Tony spent the rest of the evening on auto-pilot, stroking Loki’s back and whispering soothing reassurances into the black hair tucked against his neck. The sun had cleared the surrounding roof tops before Loki dropped off to sleep. In a way, Tony felt terrible that their monthly visit was ending on such a bad note. However, before a guard had knocked on the main door reminding Tony that it was almost time for him to leave, he had mapped out several dozen ways Loki’s revelation could be used to their advantage.

Not a one of which involved upsetting Loki by ever mentioning it to him again.

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* -
mentions of Infidelity. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing
horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on
that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these
items.*****

Time Passages - Fluff and Brotherly Assistance... of a sort.

Chapter Summary

Loki decides to help himself by helping Thor. Also the origins of Eddie the Messenger Bag and Janis.

Chapter Notes

Chapter length... Not too hot. But, the rest of it was fighting me big time and I only just gave up in disgust and sent it to Stella last night. But... Here is the front half as an Easter present.

Beta'd by the very helpful Stella. :D Since I frequently change stuff after she returns it to me... All errors are mine of course.

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 33 - Fluff and Brotherly Assistance... of a sort.

It had taken Tony a while to figure out that there was a connection between the large dog that had so conveniently driven off the thugs attacking Darcy a couple of months ago, and her sentient tote bag. Which, in homage to the Munsters, she had fondly named Eddie. In all seriousness though, who would think that their bat shit insane spouse would create something that was a cross between the *'Care of magical Creatures'* book, a *'bag of infinite holding'* and a *'big assed Grim'*.

Apparently, only someone who was a bat shit insane sorcerer who **could** create such a thing. Who was then also crazy enough to even consider giving a thing like that to a ditz like Darcy. Or the *Head Minion*, as she listed herself on her business cards.

No, seriously she did. Tony had been asked about it often enough.

But, be that as it may, Loki had gifted her the damn bag. Which, for the record, Tony hated, as it had tried to bite him on numerous occasions. Granted, Tony perhaps shouldn't have been trying to scan it, or looking to see what Darcy had stashed inside. However, bad reaction to science aside, Eddie was also the only reason Tony even considered letting psycho chick accompany him to Asgard. Well, that and the fact that Darcy wasn't taking no for an answer. Ditz bitch had trotted out to Tony's BiFrost pad screaming for Heimdal, and had wrangled an official invitation from Queen Frigga as Jane's lady companion. Still, it was only the large, obviously Loki supplied Hel hound trotting at her heels, and the fact that she was a friend of Thor's lady love, that kept her from being instantly slain as she snarked her way down the Bi-Frost and into Asgard.

Stark may have originally designed and installed Janis, Just A Nice Intelligent System, as a First Anniversary present for him, but Loki had made many after the fact improvements, that Stark knew nothing about. As she had originally been installed, she wasn't quite as helpful as Jarvis, and if he knew Stark, that was no doubt on purpose, but she was still, even in her then more limited way, quite an asset. Janis' main central processing units and servers were powered by a miniature arc reactor built into her housing and her wireless links were powered by Stark's Asgard improved stealth solar panels.

And yes, Loki was in for a share of the royalties when that improvement was released by Stark International. Very old technology for Asgard perhaps, but it still was all new to Midgard. And more importantly, off the radar so to speak, of anything Asgard might currently be scanning for.

And hadn't it been fun to get all the bits in place without anyone knowing what they were doing. Although, Loki had to admit that getting a flying long boat to pause by the right area of the roof, was much easier than parallel parking a Town Car. Not that he had allowed Stark to be their pilot when under an avoidance spell, they had snuck out in the dead of night to install all the panels, boosters and repeaters needed to make Janis functional. There were still many dead spots they were working on of course, but in the areas where Loki normally went? Loki could now communicate with Janis, allowing her to take notes and look things up for him, while also handling his administrative busy work on the sly.

All of which left Loki more time to work on his side projects, which was how he learned that in addition to storing his own power for greater workings, he could actually siphon power off of Stark's arc reactors and use them for his spells and creations. One of the first of which was Darcy's very versatile familiar Eddie. A most undignified name for such an elegant bit of spell work, but she had insisted.

Ms. Lewis was perhaps not the most skilled person he could have turned to for assistance, but she was competent and more importantly, persistent. Also, she had a mischievous streak he enjoyed and a charming disregard for the opinions of others. Couple those traits with her delight in aggravating people for her own amusement and her positive eagerness to become a 'paid minion of evil' and really, Loki didn't think he could have found anyone more suited to be his Midgardian projects assistant. A job she excelled while taking keen delight in keeping his private business, in fact, private. Despite increasingly irritated attempts by Stark and Thor to get information out of her.

Therefore, when Darcy expressed an interest in not getting any older, Loki could certainly see how it could work to his advantage if he assisted her. Even if it meant having to talk to Thor.

"Thor? When she is visiting, what exactly does your lady Jane do when you have duties you have to attend? I mean when she isn't *visiting* me on the Bi-Frost site." Loki had asked when Thor came to see him one evening, maintaining his handstand while waiting for his not-brother to answer. Both of them knowing that *visiting*, was not exactly the word Loki wanted to use.

"You mean besides visiting mother?" Thor rumbled, sinking down to the floor on the large cushions Loki had finally allowed into the room so he didn't have to sit on the hard stone floor. "Mostly she reads, or takes long baths." He grinned. "She likes our bath pools."

Loki smiled to himself as he began a slow walk over, holding two intermediate positions for several moments. Stark also liked Asgard's bath pools, although he preferred them when Loki was in them.

"Does she interrupt you too much?" Thor asked with a note of concern. Loki glanced over at him

before standing upright.

“Not often. But it did occur to me that if you are going to continue to see her, she is going to need some attendants. And I did think perhaps if you found them for her now, she would have someone to keep her entertained while you are busy.”

Loki did a standing front split, ignoring Thor’s wince as he leaned into it, placing his cheek against his calf before extending his arms.

Thor closed his eyes and leaned his head back, resting it against the wall for a moment as he considered Loki’s last statement. After a moment he sighed, straightening up to meet Loki’s gaze. “I am not sure Jane would like that much,” Thor’s said ruefully. “I don’t believe she has met anyone at court that she seems interested in befriending just yet.”

“Well, I am sure she will in time,” Loki said comfortingly before continuing in a more mater-of-fact manner. “However, until that happens, you have the perfect opportunity to get her a Midgardian attendant. Doing so now means they can become acclimated to Asgard while Jane doesn’t have official duties.”

“Loki, a Midgardian?” Thor’s doubtful look made it very plain what he thought of this advice.

“Of course, Thor, *Midgardian*.” Loki rolled his eyes in mock despair. “Did you think to someday sweep the poor woman from her realm and strand her here without even one companion from her home realm?” Thor thought about that a moment, a process he obviously didn’t do that often, as it always looked particularly painful when he did indulge in it.

Thor’s confusion was reflected in his puzzled tone, “Why? Mother didn’t have attendants from Vanaheim.”

“Of course not.” Loki tch’ed, continuing his stretching as if this was just a casual conversation to while away the time while he exercised. “Unlike your Jane, the Queen was a spoil of war at the time. It wouldn’t have made sense for her to have someone from the old homestead whispering subversion in her ear now, would it?”

Thor stood abruptly, looking stricken. While it hadn’t been harped upon, how Frigga had come to be in Asgard wasn’t exactly a secret by any means, but Thor always conveniently forgot those more uncomfortable details.

“At any rate, why don’t you see if she would be interested in having Ms. Lewis as a future attendant? She is currently working for me on Midgard, but I don’t really have enough to keep her busy full time. And I definitely wouldn’t mind allowing you to take over her salary during any time that she accompanies Lady Jane to visit, if only to save myself money by sharing the cost of her salary.” Thor snorted, knowing full well how Loki would spend freely for what he wanted, but also how he liked to keep a firm grip on his expenses.

“Besides,” Loki continued wryly, “her presence would admittedly keep Lady Jane from spending so much time distracting my worker by asking unending questions.” He shrugged. “Who knows, Thor? Perhaps if she is accompanied by someone she is already familiar with, your Jane might find it easier to visit some of the court ladies and start to make friends with them.”

“Aye.” Thor said thoughtfully, worrying his lower lip with his teeth and staring unseeingly at the large fireplace on the other side of the room. “And Lady Darcy is the type to strike up conversations even with people she doesn’t know.”

“Indeed.” Loki said with a smile, “I don’t think you could prevent her from doing so unless you gagged her.”

From the almost relieved look on Thor’s face, Loki was fairly confident that he would soon have someone arguing for Darcy to be allowed to visit Asgard on a regular basis. Thor’s petition would not be immediately refused, unlike what would happen if he attempted it. And, as soon as Thor gathered up the courage to become formally betrothed to Doctor Foster, it would be a very short step to getting Darcy a servitor’s mark. Smirking to himself, Loki was very sure he could come to an arrangement with Jane for sharing Darcy’s services. If only so Jane would have some respite from the Darcy’s constant mischief.

OoooO

Having twice avoided an actual meeting with his Ás head accountant, Tony had finally had to go see the guy. Varrin Braakson seemed nice enough. Or rather, as nice as an accountant could be, since they were all, no matter what realm you were in, for the most part fussy and pedantic. Unfortunately, the guy was not too happy that, except for their original visit when Frigga recommended him, the only way he was able to contact Tony was via letter. Hence, Tony had to make nice with the guy this afternoon. He would have much rather spent that last hour making nice with Loki.

Again.

Oh, and not only did he have to forgo spending the last hour licking scotch off the toned abs of his hot Norse god so he could see his accountant, when he left the guy’s office, Ditz Gurl was kicking her heels waiting for him in the guy’s outer office.

“Why?” Tony demanded as he followed her into the main corridor, her hell hound Eddie, almost nipping at his heels to make him move faster.

“Since you guys were apparently fucking like rabbits and missed lunch with the folks, Honey Buns sent me to make sure you made it to the dining hall on time.”

Now that had been totally worth it, Tony thought with an inner smirk.

“Does he know you call him honey buns? For that matter, why are you calling him that?” Tony asked as they joined the throng moving towards the large feast hall.

“And you call yourself a *genius*.” Darcy blew out a gusty ‘Sheesh’. “Don’t tell me you haven’t noticed how sweet Loke’s ass looks in tight leather,” Darcy protested incredulously. Her loud huff and accompanying theatrical eye roll way over done. “And no, Mister Wizard does not know I have a nick name for him that references those tight, perky cheeks of his. You, as a supposed genius, should know this because he hasn’t turned me into a frog yet.”

Dodging some slower moving traffic, and resisting the urge to kick Eddie for crowding him, Tony asked, “Should I be worried? I mean, he is mine. However, you obviously spend way too much time thinking about what his leather covers.”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah.” Darcy said dismissively, not even bothering to look in his direction as she threaded through the crowd. “Well, right now I am thinking about how much trouble I am going to get into if I don’t get your ass to the dining hall.” Looking over Tony at last, she smirked. “Which is actually not too bad even if you are an older guy, maybe you should wear shorter jackets?”

“Yeah, yeah. Yourself.” Tony jibed back, enjoying even this mild sparing while traversing

Asgard's stuffy, uptight corridors. "Tell ya what? How about you keep your dirty hands, and filthy mind off my assets. *All* my **assets**, including the one that wears a lot of green."

He should have known something was up when she directed him to the public entrance rather than the one off the hallway leading to the family wing.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*******TRIGGER WARNINGS** – This chapter will ***HAVE*** - Tooth Rotting Fluff. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please **DO NOT READ** if you have issues with any of these items.*****

Time Passages - Darcy, Eddie and Odin. Oh my.

Chapter Summary

The Royals of Asgard have a much different point of view on things than does the House of Stark.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the very helpful Stella. With several very helpful and/or cute suggestions and phrasings. :D Since I frequently change stuff after she returns it to me... All errors are mine of course.

I'm posting this while I can hardly hold my eyes open, so if I screwed something up really badly, please let me know.

Please see end notes for fan art picture Link
Last passage chapter, things get moving next chapter.

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS IN THE END NOTES

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 34 - Darcy, Eddie and Odin. Oh my.

Right before they entered the public entry of the palace's dining hall, Tony used a half skip to catch up with Darcy. "Umm, Darc, don't you think you should turn Cujo back into a hand bag?" Ignoring the low warning growl from behind him, Tony pressed on, "Unroasted animals aren't exactly welcome in here, you know." Darcy looked over her glasses at him and Tony couldn't help but return her smirk. "Yeah, except for Midgardians that is." Jane had made sure everyone knew that she was still pissed about some 'goat at the banquet' crack that Odin had made several years ago, so they both knew that Tony's joke was only funny in a this-isn't-funny kind of way.

"Tony. You know Eddie isn't a real 'animal' animal. Hell, everyone in this dump probably knows he's a construct."

Tony wondered if they also knew that damn thing could get as big as an SUV. Not that it did, as a rule. Somehow or another, the damn thing was created to be appropriately sized to the threat it was attacking. Heck, even Darcy hadn't even know he could get that big until that day he'd distracted her into leaving it unattended in his lab. Tote bag Eddie hadn't appreciated Tony trying to get a few samples. One minute he was a stylish messenger bag and the next minute he turned into a fucking Hound of the Baskervilles. Which Tony totally could have taken care of, except that the minute he'd managed to slip on one of his gauntlets and blast it with a little warning shot, the damn thing turned into a Humvee sized version of Grendel. It then proceeded to bite holes into his steel lab tables. It was more than a little embarrassing to be cornered, and unable to leave his own lab until Jarvis could summon Darcy to recall her purse. Which she did by standing at the door with a pissy

look on her face yelling, *'Get down Eddie!'* and *'You come here right now!'* Like the damn thing was some over excited collie rather than a missile repelling demon dog from hell.

And how was it even remotely possible that it only took a bit of shouting and a sternly pointed finger to get the damn thing to slink over to her with its head hung low, getting smaller with every step until it turned back into a damn tote bag with an apologetic whine?

And who the fuck thought that giving psycho girl her own killing machine was a good idea? Tony had groused to himself, *well, none other than Loki, obviously.*

Not that he had gotten any sympathy from Loki when he'd complained about it later. Instead, Loki had cooed into Tony's ear something about conditioned response escalation while stroking a strong hand down his backside. He also reminded Tony that it was his own fault for provoking the poor thing, pointing out that Eddie hadn't damaged the 'bots even though they attacked him, and did Tony really want to spend the afternoon complaining about something that wasn't going to change, or did he want to trade a back massage for a blow job? And that was the end of that, since there was no way Tony was passing up that kind of an offer.

Once he and Darcy entered the Feast Hall, Tony was so busy scanning the high table area to see if Loki had arrived yet, that he didn't notice Darcy and her mutt moving away from them. What he did notice was Odin stiffening and shooting daggers towards the back of the hall. Curious, Tony glanced back and of course, immediately saw a trench coated; high pony tailed Loki striding through large archway leading into the Gather Hall. From the startled glances of the people around him, Tony would be willing to bet big money, that his sexy long legged bastard of a partner entered the hall under an invisibility spell. Loki was definitely enough of a drama queen to stand there all invisible and wait so he could drop his spell for maximum effect once Odin was looking in his direction. However, Tony would be the first to admit he was glad Loki had waited for him to get here before he did it, so Tony could enjoy it too.

Tony had been to enough Asgardian 'State Dinners' that he's been pretty much been introduced to someone from every race that visits Asgard, and frankly, when it came to whacked out 'other realm' outfits, he's seen a lot of them. But none of them, astonishingly enough, were more out there than that of your average Earthgardian Goth. Or at least, not the version Loki was rocking. And seriously, his god was rocking it hard. His black hair pulled high in the back playing up the beautiful angles of his face before trailing down his fine looking neck and dark green eyes within some seriously smoky eye makeup, which was much more sinister looking than anything Loki had previously worn, glinted dangerously from behind little wisps of escaped hair. The faux snake bite piercings on Loki's lower lip really helped him sell the whole look.

As much trouble as he knew this was going to cause, Tony couldn't help but smile as Loki locked his eyes on Tony's and strutted towards him. And it was, in every way, shape and form, a strut that would be celebrated on any catwalk worthy of the name. Long legs flashed out from beneath his open trench coat, each multi-buckled boot placed directly in front of the other, so fluidly that it would bring a tear of joy to the eye any top agency scout. If said scout didn't break down sobbing at the sheer amount of height and confidence his Mischief Maker was projecting. People moved out of Loki's path as if their actions had been choreographed.

As masculine as Loki could be, all tall, lean and with his whipcord build and such, like the true diva that Tony knew him to be, the god could somehow make those same features feminine looking enough to be beautiful. Perhaps his build coupled with dark hair and pale skin didn't work for Asgard, but fuck if it didn't hit every button Tony had. And, it would be a shame not to preserve this moment for future posterity. So with that thought, Tony tapped his communicator. "Jarvis, with the way Odin is scowling, this might be the last time I see my little Asgardian bundle

of delight, would you be a dear and record this for me?"

While the combined cameras and communication booster units they'd previously hidden in the hall weren't as all-encompassing as those in the tower, Tony was pretty sure they covered enough angles to get a good recording of this debacle-in-the-making.

Unfortunately, there was barely a pause before a righteously annoyed Jarvis, replied in Tony's earbud,

"I am very sorry Sir, but I still only have limited access on this system and cannot access the video in the area you are currently in." Tony suppressed a sigh, apparently the little talk he'd had with Loki and Janis the last time he'd been on Asgard hadn't taken the way it had hoped.

"Jarvis, you know Daddy hates when you kids don't get along. I'm sure Janis will give you access if you're polite. So could you please just ask nicely?" Tony made a yet another mental note to find out what the hell Loki had done to his code that Jarvis couldn't even use any of the many back doors he always left to work gain access to the system.

As he approached Tony, Loki took his hands out of his pockets, slid the long black coat off in one smooth move and casually slung it over his left shoulder. Now, Tony knew that Loki and Darcy had been casting around for another fashion statement that might raise Odin's blood pressure through the roof, but this was the first time he'd seen what they had come up with. And no, his mouth was not gaping open like some of the others around him. Or at least, if it did, it was only for a moment. But who could blame him? Loki completely nailed it, wearing very little more than tight black pants and a vest. Yeah, so he did have a one sleeved open meshed top under his vest that didn't leave anything to the imagination. Even if it did skin down his left arm to disappear under a black buckle laden arm warmer thingy, it wasn't like it blocked the view of his nicely sculpted arm muscles or anything. The god's right arm was bare except for a black leather strap buckled around his wrist, matching the one around this throat.

"I just can't even leave you alone for an hour, can I?" Tony asked, unable to resist returning the Trickster's mischievously pleased smile. "Gimme that," Relieving Loki of the long coat, he turned to look for Darcy, who was as per usual, taking a picture with her phone. "Feed that to Cujo or something will ya?" Tony said, tossing the coat towards Darcy, who almost dropped her phone trying to catch it. Turning, he fell in beside Loki as best he could as the god continued towards the high table. And if this meant that he had to occasionally take an extra little quick step or two since his leggy bastard had such a long stride, Tony didn't really mind.

What Tony did mind was that Odin alternated between glaring at them and then sweeping his gaze peevishly around the hall, obviously looking for something. As Frigga was standing beside him, and Lassie and Jane weren't too far away, Tony wondered who he might be looking for. Glancing behind him, he noticed Darcy following them, and then it hit him who he didn't see following them. "Ummm, Sugar Lump, just out of curiosity, where are your guards?" Tony asked out of the side of his mouth not looking at Loki, but rather smiling and nodding politely to those they passed, ignoring the slightly scandalized looks they were receiving.

Loki frowned momentarily, glancing at him apologetically. "Blast. I knew I was forgetting something."

"Lo. We have talked about this before." Tony admonished, with an exasperated head roll in Loki's direction.

"I didn't leave them behind, Stark." His god retorted somewhat testily. "I just placed a glamour on them. It's hard to move discretely when you have a flock of mother hens following you everywhere

you go. And besides, I gave them a talisman so they could see through my avoidance spells.” He muttered under his breath, and Tony noticed that one of the diners flanking them slowly morphed into one of Loki’s guards.

Sneaking a look at the high table, Tony saw that he was not the only one relieved to know that his god had not been wandering around unattended. From the way Odin stopped searching the crowd, the guards were apparently what he had been looking for. Now that he was assured of their presence, the All Father was able to devote his full attention to glaring at them as they approached. Although for reasons Tony had no clue about, he seemed to be getting more negative attention from Odin than Loki.

“All Father, your Majesty.” Loki’s greeting to his not-parents included several unnecessary flourishes and came complete with the ‘I-am-totally-fucking-with-you’ tone of voice.

OoooO

Something about pissing Odin off seemed to work like an aphrodisiac on Loki. Whatever elaborate plans his god may have had, since it was his turn this evening, he settled for ripping Tony’s clothes off the minute they got into the suite, slapping a ‘not-born-with’ strength-sucking collar and leash on him, that he got from *‘fuck knows where’*, and dragging him straight to bed. Hell, Loki didn’t even do that cute jacked up head board trick of his, relying on the leash to keep Tony away from areas he wasn’t supposed to explore. It was rough, wildly exciting, and each of them sported more than a few bruises and bite marks by the time it was all over.

This was why a bonelessly relaxed Tony loitered in bed the next afternoon, even after Loki had left to go over material accounts with the payables clerk in charge of the Bi-Frost’s expenses. Hell, Tony didn’t even have to worry about Darcy getting home safely. She was Thor’s problem while she was keeping company with Foster. As a bonus, if stalled long enough, Loki might be back at his office and Tony would have another chance to see him before Heimdall sent him home. It was perhaps an hour after Loki left before Tony actually got up to take a leisurely shower, dress and saunter out the door. After all, these were his rooms now, so it wasn’t like someone would call security if he didn’t vacate the room in a timely manner.

Or maybe they would.

Tony had no sooner closed his apartment door behind him when he noticed a bunch of tall shiny guys in the hallway. Who had been waiting for him. For who know how freaking long. Apparently. Tony had an appointment with the All Father.

Joy.

OoooO

The airport sized throne room had not gotten any warmer or cozier since the last time Tony visited it. The place was about as warm and inviting as the North Sea in January. Which is to say, not at all. You would think, Tony mused trying not to pay any attention to the long walk ahead of him, that someplace so covered in freaking gold would cast a warmer glow. But it didn’t for some reason. Tony blamed the mile or two of highly polished stone for that. Or maybe it was the absolutely frigid attention he was attracting from the cranky man on the Throne.

“You know, I’ve been meaning to talk with you for a couple of months now.” Tony called out, before he was even halfway to the steps.

“Indeed.” Odin’s voice wasn’t loud, but that one word managed to bounce coldly off the walls a

few times before the head god continued. "I do wonder why, Anthony Stark, if you had something of import to say to me, that you did not seek me out sooner?"

"Well..." Tony paused for the several long moments it took him to finally get to the throne. While he was the last person in the world to be up on royal protocol, even he knew you didn't traipse up those steps without an invitation. So he planted himself firmly at the bottom and looked up.

"Mostly because I only have so many hours I'm allowed to be here, and no offense, talking with you was not how I wanted to spend them."

Not content with just looking down at Tony, Odin inclined his head so he could also look down his nose at him. They locked eyes for a few very long moments before Tony was startled by Odin striking a metal plate embedded in the stone beside his throne with the butt of his o-so-shiny spear.

"Leave us."

In a very well-practiced move, the guards and assorted functionaries exited the room. The booming sound of the large doors being shut also bounced echoes across the sea of stone pillars.

"While I am, of course, curious to know what you wish to speak with me about, I did call you here for a reason, Anthony Stark."

OoooO

Big surprise. All Daddy was not happy with the way Baby Boy's little rebellious streak was manifesting itself in front of the court. Nor was he happy that the subtle little hints he had dropped for Tony to take care of the problem had been ignored. However, Tony thought that maybe he should have been cut some slack on that account, since caring enough to pick up on behavior clues from others was not one of his strong points. As Pepper had repeatedly pointed out to anyone who would listen over the years.

Besides? What was the All Daddy thinking? That a *puny mortal* like him, well, of course not in his mind, but in his lovely godling's mind, could somehow rein him in? When the All Family couldn't for the whole of their godly life span? Tony was good, make no mistake about that, he was, but still.

Expect much?

As Odin ranted on about Loki dressing like several words that Tony had no clue what they meant, but most likely weren't a good thing. He was actually having a hard time biting back a smile, and suppressing a most respectful royalties-only eye roll.

I really need to start wearing sunglasses when I am on Asgard, he mused.

Fury wasn't the only ill-tempered one-eyed man he enjoyed messing with after all. It was, in truth, something he and his god enjoyed doing together, as witnessed by the events of last night, when they had greeted the royal couple before dinner.

Frigga and Odin may have been the *All-High-King-and-Queen-of-Asgard*, but last night, the nudge Odin gave Frigga was pure, *He's-Your-Son-You-Deal-With-Him*. Stark had barely managed to stop a bark of laughter at the almost too-human side of this. There was also no mistaking the put upon sigh as Frigga rolled a slightly disgruntled look at her spouse for which clearly indicated that she was well familiar with having to take the lead when it came to '*discretely*' chastising their '*boys*'. "Loki, those garments are even less suited for court than your Álfheimr outfits. And truthfully, my

darling, they do not look that good on you."

And that was, Stark added in his head, in the humble view of a someone who mixed eighteen gauge metal armor and silk in her outfits. Clearly, the Queen Mum was in desperate need of a subscription to Harper's Bazaar. *So... Yule gift problem solved then.*

Pulling a thoughtful face, which was a pure bullshit move, Loki stretched out his arm, admiring the open meshwork of his sleeve. "Oh, I don't know, I like it, and Anthony here thinks I 'rock this look' like nobody's businesses, so it can't look that bad." He paused a moment and then continued before Frigga could try again. "Of course, he thinks I rock anything that makes my—Ow!"

"You're just trying to get me popped into a prison cell, aren't you?" Tony muttered under his breath, totally ready to pinch the trouble-making bastard again if he had to. However, he was also ready to defend the fashion choices of his smoking hot god. "No offense, your majesty, but I completely disagree. Prince Charming here looks good no matter what he's wearing, even when it's your drapes."

Tony shot what could be construed as an apologetic smile towards the queen mum of Asgard. By people who totally didn't know him that was, and snaked his arm around Loki's waist giving him a quick hug just to mess with the One-eyed man.

"Oh, and look!" Tightening his grip on Loki's waist, Tony reached over and plinked the platinum Arc Reactor pendent Loki was wearing. The blue glowing pendant swung from a generous length of smooth snake skin chain, which had also been accented with a black patina. "You're even wearing the pendent I was going to give to you, but hadn't yet. Bad Loki. But it totally works with your outfit tonight so we're cool."

Loki fingered the small glowing disk, making a show of turning it to examine the various covered charging ports on the sides and then the neat inscription on the back. "*If lost, please return to Tony Stark?*" Loki's glance slid sideways to meet Tony's before he flicked a quick look at his increasingly stuffed looking not-parents. "Well, I did wonder how long it was going to take before you stuck a return to owner tag on me."

Shrugging off a death stare from Frigga, who apparently did not appreciate a good joke, Tony shrugged. "I think it's only fair, I'm the one that ended up with a 'Property of Loki Stark' tattooed on his ass that's going to last for what... fifty years, you said?" his smile curled devilishly, that last statement apparently being news to the parents, and embarrassing news at that. "Not that I'm complaining. Besides, I'd like you to have emergency identification on you, just in case you get lost someday..."

OoooO

Tony regretfully followed Odin into a small antechamber. Apparently the possibility of Loki getting lost was another thing Odin wanted to bitch about, interspersed with his moaning about Loki's outfits, Odin also felt that Tony wasn't really keeping close enough track of Loki, and Loki's activities. Apparently, his little bundle of Asgardian delight was using Tony's money to set up an information network, bribing various servants, such conduct unbecoming a prince... blah, blah, blah... in addition to dressing like an effete swish, in so far as the court of Asgard was concerned and embarrassing his family.

"Hey, it takes a lot more than a dressed up Diva to embarrass me." Tony interrupted hurriedly stuffing his hands in his front pants pockets. He decided to try to keep Loki's outfits as the main topic of their conversation, since he didn't want to touch the 'spy network' thing until he had a chance to ask his Machiavellian Prince just what the hell he was trying to accomplish.

Rolling his lower lip out a bit, Tony stared up at Odin with eyes narrowed in thought. "Technically, since you married Loki to a guy and shape locked him into his female aspect, or female for a certain value as it applies to Loki, the outfits you are complaining about are actually pretty appropriate." Tony rocked back on his heels shrugging, "I mean," he lolled his head left and right towards the ceiling for a breather. "While they might be more feminine for your average Asgardian sword swinger, they are a lot more masculine than what your Asgardian chick wears, well, except for that *beatch* that hangs with Thor."

Odin gave a look that indicated his always extremely limited tolerance for Tony's shit was rapidly running out.

No surprise there.

"Son of Howard," He intoned, tilting his head in inquiry. "You are aware that all speak translates the '*meaning*' of your words, including the ones you make up to be slyly insolent. Yes?"

"And you are aware that I don't answer to that Son of Howard crap, right? I mean, we've been over this a few times. I am not in love with being called Anthony as I prefer Tony, though I can live with either. But I really don't feel like standing around bantering with anyone who insists on bringing up my father."

Tony frowned up at Odin, "You do realize that a daddy dearest complex is something Loki and I have in common. Right?"

The way Tony tilted his head up to look at Odin with arched eyebrows was definitely respectful in all cultures, no doubt.

"Very well." Odin sighed, apparently more interested in getting his point across than smiting Tony. "Anthony Stark, I would have Loki dress more appropriately for court, and as Head of his House, I call--."

"Okay, Fine. Let's discuss this." Tony pinched the bridge of his nose. "Alright, for the sake of argument, let's say I could convince him at all, without triggering a major meltdown" He shrugged. "I don't think there is a snowballs chance in Helheim, but for the sake of argument, let's just say I could manage to even bring this topic up, and he actually decided it's the sunny day that he wants to listen to me, the question remains..." Tony took a deep breath. "Appropriately *how*? I've seen that Sif bitc--woman wear pants and running around with bare arms. And as for the rest, Loki did not invent the gorgeous silks bedecked with jewels look they rock. So, I'm really not understanding what exactly is the problem here."

"Anthony Stark!--" Odin growled, mouth twisting in disbelief.

"What? I'm just asking. So as your almost, kinda, but not really, adopted son/daughter you don't want Loki wearing silks and fun stuff while he's a guy?" Tony thought for a minute. "What about if he's female? If I can avoid being thrown off a balcony; I think I can talk Lo into going full on female and wearing dresses, he has a ton of them in his closet at my place that he wears when we go dancing. Of course, he's exclusively female when we do that, not that he wouldn't be stunning either way."

Tony wrinkled up his face in exaggerated thought, "And, I'm not sure Earthgardian female fashions would make you any happier. Our stuff seems to more form fitting and whisper thin compared to the dresses I've seen here. And the metal breast plate things? Almost non-existent."

Tony paused apparently lost in happy thought. A warning rumble from above recalled him from his

faux contemplation.” Wagging his eyebrows a moment, Tony then mugged a more serious look, “I’m not saying he might not be pissed at first, but I daresay once he thought about how well it would go over in public, he’d go for it in a heartbeat and be swanning around here with more grace than anyone but the queen. He’s the consummate diva, and I am sure he would love to introduce Earthgardian high fashion to Asgard.”

If Odin thought that glaring at Tony was going to work any better than it did when he glared at Loki, he was sorely mistaken. Besides, he really didn’t care what Loki wore or who he pissed off with his choice of fashion. And finally, at the end of the day if it gave his god something to think about that made him happy...

“As much as I would like to you stop trying to scowling at me every time we meet, I don’t think I can help you on this one.” Tony’s lips curled up in a tight smirk at the way Odin stiffened. “He doesn’t only do it to piss you off.” Although Tony would be willing to be that was the major reason. “He’s a performer you know, and he likes to put on a show, distract people from what’s really going on.” Sometimes even himself, though you would never convince Loki of *that*. “And, since it’s pretty much the only fun he can have right now, what with all the other restrictions on his behavior, I’m not even going to try to talk him out of doing it.”

Ignoring a glare from on high that could ignite river rocks, Tony decided to move ahead to his issue. “Now, before you start screaming, I just want you to listen, okay?” Tony tucked his head and gave Odin his best, *this-is-some-serious-shit* look. When the silence went on for a lot longer than was comfortable for Tony, Odin nodded.

“Proceed Anthony.”

“So... We’ve had a very serious” Tony made ‘air quotes’. “**Chat** about those grandkids you want.” It wasn’t that Odin hadn’t been paying attention to Tony, but it suddenly became laser focused. “Yeah. Not really so much a chat as a scream fest, but hey. We did end up communicating so, according to the shrinks, it wasn’t a total bust...” Tony trailed off at Odin’s spear-free hand started tapping impatiently on the side of his throne.

“Okay, moving right along, the long and the short of it is that unless you are willing to wait for the next four-hundred and eighty before Reindeer Games will even considered the idea, you need to decide which you want more, him under your thumb for that amount of time or him willing to consider starting a family. Because I am here to tell you, it won’t be both.”

“Oh?” Odin’s tone was that of mild interest only. Almost as if he didn’t really care one way or the other but was merely trying to express polite interest. Which was total bull, and Tony knew it.

Tony grimaced, “Trust me. As amazing as it may be, I have totally warmed up to the idea and have been trying to convince him to at least consider it. Without any success at all. Despite how stubborn I can be, Loki is worse. So... I am not telling you what to do, but, I suggest you find a quest, or penance or something, that Loki can perform so he can get out from under the remainder of his prison sentence. Because, until you do, there will be **no** mini-mischief makers running around terrorizing Asgard and Earth.

And yeah, the look Odin was throwing down to him was extremely skeptical to say the least. The silence in the hall became oppressive as the two stared at each other, but Tony refused to look away. While he wouldn’t admit it to anyone, once he had stopped focusing on the short term advantages, the way Loki had finally framed his objections had hit home in a very personal way with Tony.

“The long and the short of it. Our final answer. The last word on this subject is... **No**. No child of

ours will ever have cause to think that they were *created* so they could solve someone else's problem." He stared dead at Odin's one good eye. "Because as you well know, only a *complete and utter bastard* would ever do that to an child that they profess to love."

Tony's former area of expertise might have been advance weaponry, but that didn't mean he didn't know how to twist a knife when he needed to.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Goth Loki by Horns-Of-Mischief

<http://rennemichaels.tumblr.com/post/115753865868/chapter-34-darcy-eddie-and-odin-oh-my-the>

Horns-Of-Mischief excellent tumblr page - <http://horns-of-mischief.tumblr.com/>

Outfit concept by the very talented HereticalTransience -

<http://songsofcatharsis.tumblr.com/>

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* -
Nothing to speak of. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.*****

What a Tease

Chapter Summary

Even though it is not their turn, someone decides to start early. Tony is only semi-amused.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the very helpful Summerlove_jls and Reindeer Games way back in July of 2014! Since I had to tweak a few things to make it flow with the more recent chapters... All errors are mine of course.

I regret nothing... Honestly. I should, but I don't.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter – 35 Such a Tease

“Tony!”

“Brucie!” Tony cried in joyful surprise, popping his soldering iron down and spinning his chair around to face his friend. “Jarvis! Bruce is here to see me.”

“Indeed Sir,” Jarvis intoned dryly. “I did in fact try to mention that he had entered the building several minutes ago. Unfortunately, I was not able to get your attention.”

“Now Jarvis, you know I always pay attention to you,” Tony said, grinning impishly at the closest camera.

“If you say so, Sir, who am I to argue.”

“I do say so.” Jumping up Tony waved for Bruce to follow him and headed towards his labs small kitchenette. “So what brings you here on this fine, fine day?” He asked, tossing Bruce an organic fruit juice from the small refrigerator before going over to pour himself a cup of coffee.

Setting a large manila envelope on the small round table, Bruce did a modified eye roll as he sat down. “Tony it has been overcast and miserable for the last three days. Something you would know if you ever left your lab.”

Taking a sip of his coffee, Tony plonked himself on the opposite side of the table and sat his cup down out of the way. “What is miserable is that I had to find out from Fury and Odin that you and Loki had previously collaborated on a very lucrative business deal and hadn’t included me.” Sliding the envelope over, Tony opened it up, pulling out a slim document. He ruffled through the pages, which contained the details of the current ‘deal’ which he is very much a part of, thank you very much.

“Tony it’s been over two years since you found out now.” Bruce replied quietly, looking over his

glasses and smiling. "Give it up already will you?"

"No." Tony cried dramatically clutching the pages to his chest like a B-Movie diva, "Never will I let this go, you... You..." Continuing with the over the top melodrama, Tony threw one arm up and laid the back of his hand gracefully against his forehead. "You, behind my back collaborator you!"

Taking a sip of his Juice, and ignoring the performance in front of him, Bruce just shook his head ruefully. "Two years Tony."

"Don't care Bruce, I still haven't forgiven you." Tony retorted absently, not looking up as he quickly signed in the blocks awaiting his signature.

"Fine. Whatever." Bruce slid a portable drive over towards the madly scribbling inventor. "All my files have been updated with the data Loki sent down with Thor two weeks ago, you want to go over this while I'm here to answer questions?"

"Nope." Tony replied, shoving the signed collaboration agreement back in the envelope and giving Bruce his patented 'you've to be kidding me' look, completely with raised brow. "Tomorrow is Loki day and you know what that means."

"Actually, I do. It means you will be too busy fantasizing about tomorrow to pay attention to anything going on today." The doctor said with a gentle smile.

"Oh Brucie! Got it in one."

Bruce was glad that the long distant couple was doing so much better these last six months. Of course Thor playing courier several times a month while visiting Jane Foster helped a lot. It had certainly cut down the lag time as he and Loki floated proposals back and forth to each other for their next venture.

"So. What are you two doing fun this month?" Bruce asked.

OoooO

All day.

Loki had been a complete freaking tease, all god damn day.

It was still morning when Heimdall had left Loki and his bodyguards on the terrace. Loki was of course looking extra fine with a high pony tail, little silky black wisps falling down framing his face and looking like some sort of Armani model. Since the god of mischief was carrying, rather than wearing his suit coat, Tony got an excellent view of everything his well-tailored slim fitting white shirt and dress slacks were covering.

The minute his god had finished telling the majority of his guards to follow Jarvis' instructions with regard to the lab supplies they were carrying, Loki had turned and plastered himself all over Tony, nuzzling, murmuring, kissing the billionaire's neck and giving him furtive little strokes and squeezes. And the exact moment an admittedly delighted Tony had started to lean into the tall god, the bastard had pulled back, turned Tony's hand over and deposited a rolled up green and black silk tie in it, his warm breath whispering that he had forgotten how to tie it properly and didn't want to wrinkle it, could Tony please help?

Which Tony had done with fumbling fingers, even though it was a lie. And just as Tony had finished, tugging and patting the tie into place and doing a little covert stroking of his own, Jarvis

announced that Pepper was on her way to the conference floor and would like to talk to Loki before the rest of the board got there.

“I missed you,” Loki sighed into Tony’s ear as they joined two of the bodyguards in the elevator lobby.

And fuck if Tony hadn’t missed the god too. He spent a lot more time than he even wanted to acknowledge either thinking about or servicing himself after thinking about his long legged god. Just standing next to him inhaling his scent in the elevator was arousing him, more than was good for a guy getting ready to go to a meeting. The only thing that was keeping him from just canceling everything and working out an entire month of sexual frustration right here in his private elevator was the presence of Loki’s bodyguards and the fact that Pepper would kill him if he pissed off the board and wasted the one chance this quarter they had to talk to Loki.

OoooO

Introductions to the board and congratulations went quickly. Since this was the first time they were meeting Loki in person, the board had thoroughly briefed by Pepper. However, they still weren’t sure what to make of Loki sitting there with an upswept ponytail, smoky dark eye shadow and a well-tailored suit.

There were, of course, various housekeeping and general approval items that had to be taken care of at the start of the meeting, which was one of the things that made these damn things so boring. Or rather, it would have been boring if it hadn’t been so damn painful.

Loki sat beside him at the head of the large oval table with Pepper on his other side. However even when he and Pepper had been a hot item, board meetings had never affected Tony in such an uncomfortable, yet arousing way. The billionaire’s attention was shot completely to hell by long fingers lightly tracing designs over his inner thigh or occasionally pressing and kneading his package for a moment before slipping away. It also didn’t help Tony’s mental state that one of Loki’s bodyguards was standing right behind the two of them most likely had a really good idea of what the trickster was doing under the table. Pepper was no fool either and kept nudging Tony with her foot so he would pay attention to something other than Loki.

Tony spent the first hour feeling like his balls were going to explode and the second wondering how much trouble he would be with Pepper if he just threw Vixen up on the table and had his way with the God of Mischievous teasing. As tempting as that mental image was, in the end it wasn’t even Pepper’s disapproval that made him stop considering it. More it was that he didn’t want those bastard board members to even glimpse one bit more of something that was only his.

And then, maybe two hours into the meeting, pony tailed and eye lined or not, Loki became a crisp decisive force to be reckoned with. His youngish appearance and frankly androgynous looks may have confused the old farts on the board. But his wide square shoulders and piercing green eyes told them that he had been dealing with tougher than them, for longer than they had collectively lived and they were not going to waste his time, patronize or question his statements except at their own peril.

In a lot less time than was allotted on the agenda, Loki’s presentation was complete, his projections and timelines were discussed and his proposals were approved, including the surprise one that he stuck in there concerning various stock bonuses to be paid to him at newly agreed upon stages of progress. Tony may not have thought much of his board’s collective intelligence, but even they also could spot an exclusive opportunity when they saw it.

Pepper fell in love.

And while Tony couldn't be sure, he wondered if one of the younger-ish board members might not be crushing on the Trickster. During the break before lunch was served, his god circulated around the room charming the paper off the walls. And by the way that Max Warder's eyes were following him, Tony no longer had to wonder if Loki had an ardent admirer on the board, he knew it. Not only that, but his mischief maker was certainly aware of it and doing everything he could, short of agreeing to a date that evening, to make sure Maxie didn't recover from his infatuation anytime soon. Like in the next ten years, soon.

If it wasn't for the fact that Tony really would have liked to drag Loki into an empty office for a few minutes, or hours, he would have thought the whole thing was hilarious. Maxie was by no means a fan of Tony's; but he was back pedaling all over the place, trying to impress Loki with how much he had always admired Tony and his work, despite any minor disagreements they may have had in the past.

Tony wondered how close Pepper was to an orgasm, since bridge building and masterful Board control always made her very hot.

OooooO

Pepper had arranged a publicity outing for them that evening starting with dinner at Jean-Georges over at Trump Tower, she was sure Loki would appreciate one of their six-course tasting menus. She was bringing one of her friends as a stand in for her west coast bound hubby. One, Samuel Shoop, a clothes designer Pepper knew from the charity circuit, who was dying to talk to Loki about his look. Afterwards, they were going to drop in at a sponsor's event for the next New York Business Expo and Conference.

"An hour, Tony, that's all I ask, come in do the circuit, say hello to a few people and show off Loki to the media."

At the time she had proposed it, Tony thought this was a bit of a risky request, since when he had seen the god the previous month on Asgard, he had been in a particularly foul mood. But luck smiled on Pepper as always and when asked, Loki told her he would be delighted to meet her friend and try to get some good press for Stark Industries.

Of course he would, the teasing bastard, because Loki knew a very aroused Tony just wanted to stay home and get fucked.

After the board meeting, the three of them were scheduled to be back up at the penthouse.

"Okay you two; you talk to Maureen Orth of Vanity Fair, a short interview I promise. Then they'll set up and take a few pictures, I think maybe the terrace and the library?" Pepper, frowned thoughtfully at Tony. "We've got some lovely fall color going on out there and I don't think you've ever done any photo spreads in your library. If you don't let Maureen drag you into an extended chat and hopefully they'll get done in time for you guys to be on time for your sessions and still get at least an hour or two of down time before we have to get ready for dinner."

Pepper and her assistant chivied them into Tony's private elevator.

"Tony, why are there two benches on either side of your elevator?" Loki asked puzzled. "I don't recall them being in here last time I was on Midgard?"

"Ah..." Tony began, coloring slightly, ignoring the grin curling up the corners of Pepper's mouth. "Since I don't have a hall door, like you have in Asgard, I wanted someplace for your guards to be able to sit comfortably while they waited. This way they are right in the 'hall' so to speak and

Jarvis can communicate with them and open the door for them at need.” He was also going to get them all up to speed on using Stark Tablets for surveillance and have a couple of his senior tower guards show the ones who hadn’t been here before the ropes.

Anything to keep them out of his penthouse from now on, Tony had decided. He wanted no more surprises when he forgot about them and wandered out to get another bottle of whatever from his bar without bothering to get dressed. And besides, tonight, he intended to have the loudest monkey love, chandelier swinging sex in all the realms and it was going to start the minute they got home. If that meant sex in the foyer or living room, then so be it. Hell, he’d use one of the benches in the elevator if it wasn’t for the presence of the guards.

Since Tony had made sure that Loki’s whole contingent made this trip, he also had the ones not currently on duty with Loki, being fitted for suits and everyone was getting a refresher course in how to conduct themselves when out in public on Midgard. The two going to dinner with them tonight would be buddy paired with two of Pepper’s bodyguards, so they would hopefully blend a bit than the last time they’d been on Earth.

OooooO

Going out that evening, both Pepper and Loki looked great. Pepper in her signature sapphire blue and Loki in a wickedly fine charcoal suit. Loki was also wearing a new set of Stars & Moon jewels that had been sent to him via Pepper from Harry Winston Jewelers. Each unit in this set consisted of only diamond encrusted beads that were slid onto Loki’s hair with an emerald and silver drop attached to each with a length of filament. Apparently Pepper had liberated some of the Loki colored filament from Tony’s lab and supplied it to the jeweler. A thin braid at each side of his temple and gathered in the back, had the beads fastened to them so the drops were allowed to fall, on both sides of his hair to differing heights.

“So... Discount or free?” Samuel asked Pepper admiring Loki’s hair ornaments after congratulating him on scoring a Vanity Fair spread. Loki looked at the designer with a furled brow.

“Discount right now, Vanity Fair is definitely going to use some of the pictures of Loki wearing them out on the terrace, as for the rest...” Pepper snickered at Tony’s scowl. “That depends on Tony smiling on the way out of here and the expo thing. Another two pictures in a major publication and they’re free.”

“You know Pep, I can afford to pay for the stuff I want.” The billionaire grouched as the limo threaded its way through the bustling evening traffic.

“Midgardian craftsman also gift items to prominent people in hope of future trade?” Loki asked curiously.

As much as Loki did know about Earth, Tony knew there were bound to be a few things that hadn’t really come to his attention during his previous visit, unobtrusive endorsements being one of them.

“Yeah, they do. But you don’t need them to do it, if anyone has the money to just buy what they want it’s you.” Tony said with a sour glance at Pepper.

“Oh come on, Tony, they approached me.” She laughed. “I would certainly never go asking, you know that. But with Loki only being here six days a year, anything he wears is going to make a major publication.”

The discussion moved on to other areas when Samuel asked Loki about the complete change in his

look.

“Well I can hardly wear my armor,” Loki replied with a wonderfully charming smile. “So I decided to go for something that looks more harmless, and won’t play into fears from my more unfortunate visit.” At Samuels nod, acknowledging that Loki had managed to create a gender bending disconnect between Loki now and Loki then, the god grinned naughtily. “But mostly I do it because it drives the All Father *absolutely* insane.”

Which Tony has to admit was pretty freaking funny.

Loki then regaled them with a recent harangue that he had ended with a dulcet rejoinder of, “*But father, Anthony likes to see me looking like this.*”

“Oh sure,” Tony mock grumbled, “Throw me under the bus. You wouldn’t wear anything you didn’t want to wear.”

“True,” Loki agreed, patting his hand, “But it was hysterical to see his face, especially when he had to bite back several nasty remarks because I waited until the Álfheimr ambassador was approaching him. However he was becoming used to that look,” Loki sighed, affecting a sad demeanor. “Darcy had suggested that I consider going Goth. And we found a store called appropriately enough, ‘*Songs of Mischief*’. While the outfit we picked up there didn’t cause the All Father to fall straight into an Odin sleep, it did upset him enough that he finally quit hinting that he was unhappy and called Tony in for a chat.”

“Not that that did him any good,” Tony said, sharing a smirk with his mischief maker.

OoooO

A short while later when they were getting out of the limo, Loki paused for a long minute to regally look around him as the cameras flashed, Tony thought maybe the god liked the idea of getting splendid presents given to him. When he gifted the paparazzi with the most wickedly delicious smile in his arsenal, he was pretty sure of it. However when the trickster leaned in to give Tony a kiss on the temple while whispering in his ear, ‘*If you don’t smile for the nice camera man Tony, I may remove various parts of your anatomy*’, Tony knew.

Over the last several months, Tony had come to love many different things about the dark haired god. Things he would forget during the times when Loki only visited yearly. Now that he saw him every month, Tony could remember how much he loved the cute pout of dismay Loki got when his long hair decided it wanted to curl every which way, refusing to be tamed without a full on battle. And nothing was better than the wicked gleam in those dark green eyes that let Tony know his god was getting ready to do something that would not meet the approval of society in general, and was just downright sneaky. Something that was always as amusing as hell to Tony, in part because it done with such fiendish cleverness, but mostly from the absolute joy that Loki struggled to conceal when Tony laughed and applauded the god’s wickedly funny pranks.

During the mini-confusion of being seated, Tony leaned over to Pepper and whispered, “Potts, if you turn him into a media whore, I’m going to fire you.”

Pepper just laughed at him.

OoooO

Three hours later he had taken off his jacket and tie while walking through the foyer and had just thrown them down on the bar when Tony decided that enough was enough.

“Come here, you,” Stark growled stalking over and stripping the suit coat off the tall god. “I’ve been waiting all day to get my hands on you.”

“Have you now, Stark?” Loki said, looking at him from the corner of his eye with a sharp smile as he surrendered his coat, but slipped away before Tony could grab him. Knowing the unrelenting teasing he would most likely be receiving this evening from Stark, Loki had enjoyed giving a bit of that back, and working his little mortal up all day long. Particularly after the photo shoot had run long and they didn’t get their few hours of privacy this afternoon. Frankly, Loki was amazed that Stark hadn’t decided to drag him up to a hotel room while they were at the conference center.

“You know damn well I have, you’ve been a major tease since you got here.” Tony told him, tossing Loki’s coat over the back of a chair, he turned back to watch with oddly glittering eyes as Loki hmmm’d in agreement.

“I am sure I have no idea what you are referring to Stark.” He purred and knowing that Tony was watching his every move, he positively strutted down the hallway into the second bedroom that was now used as his dressing room. He emerged a few seconds later with the case for his new Stars and Moon set and a small stand mirror, intent on teasing the billionaire some more by ignoring him.

“Oh yeah, you’ve been pawing me all day, how long do you think I can stand it?” Tony warned as he quirked a brow at the god. “I’m dying here you know.”

Tony unbuttoned his shirt, tossing it aside as he walked over and stood in front of Loki.

“Oh, and my turn, my rules, so my name to you is Tony, not Stark.” He said warningly, running a teasing finger down Loki’s nose, flicking it lightly on the tip. “I want you to remember that since you aren’t cuming tonight until you scream it at least twice.”

“Oh really?” Loki drawled with a smirk. Stark being demanding was amusing, so long as he did not get carried away with it. Which truth be told, he often did. But thankfully, usually by the time Stark had crossed that line, Loki was too far gone with lust to take offence. If he even noticed.

“Uh huh. It wasn’t very nice of you to rub and tease all damned day.” Tony told him, leaning forward to run careful fingers through ends of Loki’s smooth inky hair, before reaching up and tugging gently on one of the emerald and diamond drops, “Bad, god. Bad.”

Loki lifted his chin gifting Tony with a challenging look, Stark would be amazed at how bad he could be. “I’ve always said that anticipation is the best part of anything.”

Tony huffed, taking the mirror out of Loki’s hands and putting it on the coffee table. “That, Bambi, is where you are wrong,” Tony said, climbing onto Loki, straddling his lap. “That much anticipation starts to hurt after a while. But I forgive you... Since it’s my turn, perhaps we’ll see how much anticipation you like? I guarantee you that one of the things I am going to do is tease you until you beg me to let you cum.”

Tony smiled down at Loki, his forefingers cradling the sides of Loki’s jaw while his thumbs softly stroked his lips, one pressing just a little on the lower lip to pull it open a bit, borrowing a favorite trick of his.

“And maybe I will, but maybe I’ll send you back to Asgard all worked up like you had me all day.” Tony continued in a whisper, his lips almost brushing Loki’s, “What do you think of that, huh smart guy?”

Loki suppressed both a shiver and the urge to lean forward as Stark's breath warmed his lips. "And maybe I am too tired to change?" Loki challenged, pulling back with a teasing smile determined to get at least one more rise out of Stark.

OoooO

Tony followed Loki as he leaned back, pressing him against the cushions. The amount of energy it took Loki to create a change was not something that was going to be a problem, at least not tonight. "Not to worry, you don't need to change, you're perfect just the way you are. You make a beautiful woman, but I originally fell in love with this smart, funny hot guy we both know. I want him tonight. Even if that means it's time to do it Frosty au natural, and celebrate what a special little snowflake my god really is."

Chapter End Notes

And.... That's a wrap!

It was two years ago this month that I started posting on Ao3. I am not a natural writer, so the process has been a bit of a long hard slog, but I have met and communicated with so many lovely people that it was well worth the effort. - RM 04-17-2015

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

The name of the store Loki is talking about is a homage to the tumblr pages of our Goth Loki Artist Rinelin at Horns-of-Mischief and Heretical Transience at SongsOfCatharsis

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS – This chapter will *HAVE* - Nothing to speak of. If this is a problem for you please don't read it. Nothing horribly graphic or anything but some areas could get trigger-y for people sensitive on that topic. Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.*****

What did you do?!

Chapter Summary

Chapter 36 Has been reposted and Chapter 37 has been added.

Chapter Notes

PLEASE READ AND HEED THE WARNINGS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CHAPTER

I don't think much has changed in this chapter. I had gone back and added a few elements that were originally going to be in Chapter 37, but took many of them out. If you didn't like it before, you still won't. Feel free to skip to Chapter 37. Or wait until **Stark Intergalactic** where our story takes on a final and much more upbeat arc.

Beta'd by Summerlove_jls Jamie Thompson & Catlin Reindeer Games19 last July, but I have been back and forth with this chapter a million times since then, especially when I changed and then reversed things last month. So any errors are all mine.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 36 – What did you do?

Tony laughed as he ground his hips against his special snowflake of a god. He had a plan, he knew Loki was worried about what Tony might think of his Jotun anatomy, but Tony honestly didn't care what the final plumbing looked like down there. And maybe as a little bonus he would tease enough that it would give his naughty partner an idea of what it felt like to be ruffled up for hours at a time without being able to do anything about it.

Tony's eyes narrowed in concentration a moment, not quite sure how this was going to work, before looking up with an amazed expression. His delighted brown eyes met Loki's alarmed green one.

Loki's eyes grew huge "By the Nine, Stark, what did you do?!"

"Oh... My... God..." Tony cooed rapturously as Loki's eyes fluttered shut and he sagged bonelessly back against the couch. Magic surrounded Tony, an effervescent feeling running through his entire body. It was like swimming in freshly poured champagne. Millions of tiny bubbles of euphoria were skittering all around his body, tingling everything, leaving him ridiculously giddy and unfucking-believably aroused.

"Fuck," Tony moaned into Loki's mouth, before taking complete possession of it.

The feeling he got from pulling Loki's magic was better than the buzz he would have gotten from drinking a whole bottle of scotch while walking around sniffing an open tin of mortal nip. After several long minutes, Tony let go of Loki's lips, coming up for a much needed breath of air, his

heightened awareness of the god's body almost overwhelming him.

In his many years he has smoked some kick ass shit, but the buzz from Loki's magic was like ten times more potent than the best weed he had ever smoked. Did magic feel like this to Loki all the time, He wondered? If it did, how the hell did Loki ever concentrate on anything at all?

Every inch of his skin felt like it was tingling. Not to mention how hyper sensitive his fingertips were, feelings so intense they burned straight through his brain and dove directly down to his cock.

Oh yeah, this was so going to be worth a month long wait, he told himself. Lightly feathering more kisses to the corner of Loki's mouth, before moving on to the god's wonderfully sculpted cheekbone, the fluttering lids half covering those gorgeous emerald eyes and finally that divinely shaped temple where little tendrils of hair tickled Tony's own lips.

After several long minutes of chasing Loki's breathy little whines, he reluctantly stood, yanking a startled Loki out of the chair. Wrapping his hands underneath the surprised god's ass, he hoisted Loki up, running his hands over the godling's commando smooth ass and under those long thighs until he had them positioned around his waist.

Ignoring Loki's surprised yelp, Tony carried his god into the bedroom and positioned him onto the center of the bed. It took only a few moments to strip both of them of shoes and socks. Once the offending footwear had been taken care of, Tony all but dove onto bed, pinning his now protesting god underneath him, as Tony's hands danced all over that sinfully wickedly hot body.

"Stark." Loki huffed, blinking owlishly in an effort to concentrate on something beside the sensation of Tony's warm fingers. "I change before we play, you know that."

His Extremis and Asgardian gifted strength, that Loki had not had a chance to shackle this month, allowed Tony to pretty much move the god any way he wanted to and more importantly hold him wherever and however he wanted to hold him. However, hands that were holding down a squirming god however couldn't stroke and tease; so Tony paused for a moment holding the now completely turned over god down by lying across his back as he rummaged around his nightstand. Dropping a few items on the bed, Tony flipped the god over and straddled Loki's hips. The playboy's hands danced expertly up the god's sides, lightly tickling them before Tony leaned over, sliding his torso against Loki's as he ran his hands up both of the god's arms to tangle their fingers together.

"Here," Tony breathed into his ear, rocking back and forth, pressing down as much as he could while nuzzling into Loki's neck and taking soft little bites along his jawline. Moving their hands until they were over Loki's head, Tony transferred his grip so he could pin both of Loki's wrists together at the top of the bed. Tony patted around for a second on the bed with his free hand until he found what he was looking for. He clicked the metal cuff around one pale wrist before threading it through the head board and snapping the remaining cuff around Loki's other wrist.

"Stark, what are you doing?" Loki's eyes, which had been drowsily half lidded, flew open as the first cuff was snapped into place. "You have to give me back my magic..." Loki's breath hitched and his eyes closed as Tony bit down on his neck, before sucking and kissing the bite mark, "So I can change..." Loki continued sighing and rutting up against Tony. The playboy hissed in delight, following the god's thrusts with a downward pressure of his own as his erection rode Loki's thigh. The friction caused by the material of their slacks on his throbbing cock felt so sweet that Tony spent a few long moments doing a little sighing of his own.

Tony shifted, nudging the god's legs apart until he was lying fully between those sweet sculpted thighs. Enjoying the feel of the god fully spread beneath him, Tony wound a long strand of silky

hair around his fingers. Using his captured lock of hair, Tony pulled the god's head back so he could suck at the tender spot where Loki's neck met his collarbone. The other hand Tony busied unbuttoning his god's shirt and pushing it aside, before making short work of unfastening Loki's belt, pants button and finally the zipper on his slacks.

Tony breathed in delighted as a newly freed part of Loki rose majestically to meet the playboy's warm willing hand. The fact that Loki finally had gone commando under his close cut suit had played a large part in Tony's spur of the moment plan for the evening. Perhaps, as the god had been hinting lately, tonight was finally the night that Loki was going to do away with those damn teasing magic briefs of his once and for all. Or perhaps his trickster had planned to tease Tony even more by making him think that, before shifting into his female form. Either way, Loki had not factored in Tony's impatience in whatever further teasing he'd had planned for the evening.

"Come on, Stark," Loki panted, rubbing up against the hand that had slid in to his open pants cupping him firmly. "Give me back my magic; we'll be out of these clothes in no time."

"Oh no, Bambi, you are not getting out of this that easy." Tony chuckled, as he stripped Loki's slacks off, reluctantly shifting off him a moment to remove them and hurriedly losing his own while he was at it.

"The next time we go out, I am so going to spend the evening groping you." He told the pale slender god as he ran both hands up the insides of Loki's thighs, across his flat hips and up his chest, twinning his fist in Loki's tie before sliding his mouth down on Loki's hard length and just holding it in his mouth as Loki tried to twist away with protesting little huffs. Huffs that turned into protesting whines as Tony moved his hands down to hold Loki's hips still against the bed. He waited until Loki's hips had tried unsuccessfully several times to buck up into his still mouth before releasing the god's cock with a popping noise.

"Say my name and I'll suck it," he promised the fussy deity.

"Stark...."

"No, my first name silly," Tony said.

Blinking hard, half hooded eyes finally found Tony's. "By the nine you stupid creature, your mortal body can't handle my magic. Give it back, and then we can play!" Loki growled.

Instead of answering him, Tony just took a long twisting lick from the base of Loki's cock to the tip, causing it to twitch in appreciation despite the breathy litany of complaints from Loki about stupid mortals who didn't know what they were doing.

Jotun's were built a bit different, obviously. Now that he could finally get a look at it, Tony saw that Loki's nicely impressive cock a bit higher on the pelvis than a human's would be and underneath, he had a full on set of tight lady parts, with his balls inset on either side of the mound. Tugging on the skin of Loki's cock actually pulled the folds around his vagina open slightly allowing a glimpse of his already hard clitoris, which Tony just could not resist stroking with his thumb before lightly drawing it teasingly down the length of the already moist fold.

Loki jumped.

Ignoring the husky curses being addressed to him, since none of them included his first name, Tony continued to tease the glistening folds, fascinated by how Loki's balls would become semi visible when the teased muscles tightened or twitched.

Pausing his examination of Loki's new anatomy to lick a bit of precum off the god's taut, quivering belly, Tony glanced up to find Loki glaring half-heartedly at him. Maintaining eye contact he nuzzled his knuckles a bit more into Loki's wet fold, dipping his thumb into the slick opening before sliding it against the god's clit. He raised a brow in amused inquiry at the now squirming god.

"Stark--" Loki's voice hitched as Tony's thumb did a small circular motion over that sensitive nub, "You're not... Thinking right... I need my magic..." Loki groaned as Tony's wet tongue flicked his clit, swirling around it in imitation of his thumb's movements that had been so well received a moment earlier.

"You don't need to change, there's nothing wrong with how you are right now. Besides, I'm having fun." Tony said, sticking his tongue out at Loki, before bending his head to press it into the fold and lick upwards, ending up swirling it around Loki's clit before sucking hard on it while his other hand held down and rubbed the sensitive underside of Loki's cock.

And the cherry on Tony's trickster god sundae was, that in this form, the god was completely smooth. Tony was delighted at how completely available and responsive every spot he touched was. Laying his cheek against the underside of Loki's shaft, Tony slid a finger inside those warm wet folds while licking and mouthing the god's mound. The effervescent magic feeling threatening to drown Tony every time Loki shivered.

Kneading Loki's mound made the most incredible hot stuttering noises come out of the god's mouth, interrupting, at least temporarily, his complaints about still being in his male form.

Clothed Loki had the appearance of a smoking hot Æsir male, but per Odin's meddling, his base state reproductively was now either a fully functioning Jotun or female. With Jotun being the best of both worlds Tony thought laughing happily to himself. He moved his finger back and forth a few times before adding a second one, his moan joining Loki's at how good and tight it felt.

Tony mouthed one of the god's balls, feeling it shift under the soft skin, rising up almost completely into his mouth as he gently sucked on it, making the muscles in both Loki's cock and vaginal wall twitch.

Nuzzling his way up Loki's chest, Tony continued to slide his fingers back and forth while letting the pad of his thumb ride slickly up over the god's clit with every stroke. He felt Loki's muscles contract tightly around his fingers every time he stroked that fat perky nub. After a few soft bites and several long minutes suckling Loki's nipples, Tony gave each of them one more sharp nip causing shudders to race down Loki's body. Shifting higher still he reclaiming Loki's mouth, muffling his soft entreaties to change.

It wasn't until he added a third finger that he noticed a bump on the back vaginal wall. Rubbing his fingers across that interior bump caused Loki arch off the bed, moaning loudly. It only took an instant for Tony to realize that the Jotun equivalent of a prostate gland could apparently also be stroked from the vaginal cavity.

Or it could be a second clit, who knows? All Tony knew was that Loki had pulled his mouth away and was disjointedly telling Tony he needed to change while trying to bury himself on Tony's fingers and squirming around on the bed as much as he could while handcuffed to the head board.

"Please, Stark... please," Loki begged, gasping, "I want to change... Uhhhhh...at least... veil... Pendant Stark..."

"We don't need to hide anymore from anyone. You certainly don't need to hide, you're beautiful

like this too,” Tony whispered, kissing the god’s damp temples while he patted around on the bed with his other hand finding the lube and the foil packet he had dropped there earlier.

Tony pressed three fingers in as far as they could go, pressing them back against Loki’s prostrate while rolling his thumb down on Loki now perfectly aroused nub. “I love you like this,” he breathed into Loki’s ear as the god’s body contracted.

With one more quick nip to his jaw, Tony licked a long stripe down Loki’s chest as the god, his legs pressing together as he unsuccessfully tried to keep Tony’s hand from being removed. Tony quickly opened the condom packet, rolling it into place on his own stiff length.

“Hell yeah, I’m euphoric, now shush, we’re playing,” he told the god still muttering about energy overloads and other crap, as he shifted into place between those fucking perfectly shaped thighs leaning up to lick a bit more of the pre-cum that had dripped onto the god before kissing that alluring belly. The engineer wrapped the fingers of his other hand around Loki’s cock and stroked upwards before thoroughly tonguing the gland and then engulfing it in his mouth. Hollowing out his cheeks on the down stroke he pressed down far as he could without gagging. Lifting Tony pumped Loki’s cock again provoking a cascade of breathless yeses from the writhing god.

Following the success of stroking he went down again with his mouth and applying suction before releasing it and rubbing a lubed finger gently across Loki’s rear opening.

Loki jerked upwards away from that questing finger but Tony just followed him, continuing to stroke the opening, not pressing it in, but not removing it either, he knew from experience that gravity and sensation were on his side.

After a few seconds of Tony just holding his mouth still and humming happily, Loki gave a little whimper as he backed up, impaling himself just a bit on Tony’s finger so he could buck up with his cock. The pressure of the finger slowly entering him made him lift a little higher each time, but since it also followed him up, each down stroke caused it to be buried in a little deeper. A few times Tony removed his finger to circle soothingly around outside, gathering up extra lube before replacing it to its previous depth, usually licking and nibbling Loki’s cock to distract him as it reentered.

After a few minutes he was in far enough to find the other side of that sensitive little bump and he nudged it hard. Loki almost bucked Tony off of him. The god whined a bit when Tony added a second slippery finger, but still maintained a strong stroke, burying his cock in Tony’s mouth before pulling away to bury the lubed fingers in his ass. After several more strokes, Tony switched his mouth to Loki’s clit and fold, and added a third slippery finger. He pressed hard against that little gland causing the god to give a choked scream as Tony worked his fingers in and out, no longer in time with the god’s strokes.

Feeling Loki spasm Tony clamped his hand around the base of the god’s cock just in case and pulled his fingers out.

“Tony! Tony! Please!” Loki shuddered and went rigid a minute before collapsing and frantically begging, “Please veil, oh Yggdrasill please, hide us, please, more...”

“We will, we will,” Tony told him breathlessly, almost ready to cum himself just from Loki’s reaction. Effortlessly flipping the god over, Tony pushed his legs apart climbing between them and scooting the god forward until he was on his knees with his cuffed hand gripping the square black wrought iron of the head board. Quickly separating his folds, Tony slowly inched his cock into Loki’s almost too tight warmth. Once he had finally buried himself all the way in, he shuffled his knees forward just a bit more and rotated his hips as Loki moaned.

“Oh my god, are you tight,” he growled, giving a little push and feeling the pulsing contractions running through Loki’s interior folds.

“So hot, so beautiful and mine, mine forever,” he gasped as his cock was gripped and released as if a warm hand had briefly tightened around it. Tony was buried to the hilt inside the god, enjoying the sensation of Loki’s contractions gently squeezing him. Loki began shaking, gasping as his breath kept hitching, unable to move his hips because of Tony hands holding tightly in place.

After a particularly heartfelt whine, Tony started slowly stroking in and out, each time stopping when the only thing left inside of Loki was the head of his cock. He waited until the god’s until the body below him was squirming, needy and agitated and oh so ready and only then did he slowly slide back in until he was totally buried in the god’s folds. This was Loki’s first time in this shape, and just the idea of that made Tony want to release. Instead of pulling out, he spread Loki’s legs further so he could inch closer and then thrust just that much further in. He loved totally filling Loki and then holding him down until a pleading whine and some artful hip rolling encouraged him to move again.

He was enjoying the smooth, wet, gliding sensation when Loki thrust quickly back against him and then pulled away, seemingly not happy with Tony’s more leisurely pace. Tony moved in a just bit closer and reached down to press his hand over Loki’s mound. Letting his fingers curl in slightly he allowing Loki to set a more punishing pace. The god shuddered as he tipped his hips first one way and then another apparently unable to decide which sensation was stronger, stimulating his prostate or rubbing his balls and clit against Tony’s hand.

“Stop, stop,” Tony gasped, shifting his grip to the god’s hips and holding him still. A loud protesting whimper came from Loki as he pulled out of the quivering god.

Tony, patted the sheets quickly to find the lube and reapplying it generously to Loki’s ass and then his own cock. Cupping the god’s cheeks and separating them, he lined up and slowly pushed in. Pausing to stroke his one hand comfortingly across Loki’s back, while his other spread the rest of the lube on his hand onto Loki’s twitching cock, using that grip to encourage the god to lean backwards as he slowly buried his own length to the hilt.

“Stark,” The god gasped shuddering. “We. Can’t.”

“Shhhh, it’s okay, were going to wait a minute,” he told the panting deity as he rubbed circles on his back, “It’s okay, just breathe. You can do it; Oh god Bambi, I want to make you feel as good as you make me. God, I love you. You’re so beautiful.” Tony babbled.

Tony started slowly stroking Loki’s cock. His god's breaths were uneven, then Tony rolled his hips groaning and slowly pulling out just an inch or so before stroking back in with another tight roll and Loki’s breath hitched at every stroke. He used his left hand on Loki’s hip and pulled the trickster back just a bit more as he leaned over his back adjusting his stroke until the god cried out and shuddered, letting Tony know he had found the right angle to hit his prostrate. Tony started moving both his hand and his hips faster. Occasionally, Tony shifted his down stroke so it didn’t end until Tony’s hand had pressed down Loki’s shaft, over his balls and buried in the fold below his wet clit.

“Tony!” Loki shouted, “Oh gods. Yes. Tony. Please!”

Okay, that worked real well.

Tony’s snapped his hips back and forth faster while his hand was rubbing Loki from the tip of his cock all the way to his clit. The god started yelling in old Viking or something.

After perhaps another few minutes of pumping in the back and stroking in the front, Loki cried out wordlessly.

“You cum,” The playboy panted.

“Loki! You cum now!” Tony ordered.

The god sobbed, spraying his seed all over the bed and Tony’s hand.

Tony grabbed Loki’s hips with both hands and drove into the god several more times as Loki spasmed around him until Tony came with a harsh incoherent cry of his own, collapsing onto Loki’s back.

Chapter End Notes

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As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.
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*******TRIGGER WARNINGS*******

This chapter was written as impaired judgment between two people with a long standing relationship. However I am still adding a *** **Possible marital rape trigger** *** I didn’t write it as one, but depending on your point of reference there is a possibility that it could seen as or trigger those sensitive on the subject.

Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.

*******TRIGGER WARNINGS*******

Note Trigger Warning Related Comments - I still have the original comments for Chapter 36, so I am well aware of some of the commenters feelings on this subject matter, my personality and my moral failings.

I have read, at least twice, every comment this chapter originally got, and I also saved a copy of them for the object lesson they provided me as a FanFic Writer. There is no need to rehash anything that was said. If you disliked this chapter then, you still won’t like it. Now is the time to hit the back space button, close this page or skip ahead to Chapter 37.

Aftermath

Chapter Summary

Morning has broken. And it is not much of a dream. Loki and Jarvis are particularly stressed. - Final Chapter of Anthony of Asgard.

Chapter Notes

PLEASE READ AND HEED THE WARNINGS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CHAPTER

Chapter 36 has been reposted.

Stark Intergalactic Part Three of the Queens Grace Series will be posted in a series of one shots starting next week. You can bookmark or subscribe to it now. It is there that our story will take on a final and much more upbeat arc.

Many, many thanks to all who have read Anthony of Asgard. I do hope it didn't disappoint you too much. And special thanks to all who have commented. Particularly in the past day or two. You all rock!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 37 – Aftermath

Loki felt a warm weight on his side and back. It took him a minute to become coherent enough to force the eye not buried into a pillow open. He closed it, as dizziness overtook him. Wishing for a brief instance, that he hadn't even bothered open it in the first place, he fell back asleep. It took several more attempts before he woke up coherent enough to keep his eyes open.

Oh. Stark's room. I'm still on Midgard, he thought as his eyes tried to flutter shut again. Loki felt fuzzy-headed and bone deep tired. More so than the usual post-orgasmic lassitude he normally felt after having adventurous sex with his short Midgardian. He also felt Stark lying on him, using him as a pillow. But not for much longer, he thought tiredly. One side of his lips curled into a half grin.

Stretching, Loki heard a mumble of discontent from behind him. And far more alarmingly, a clink of metal over his head and... *Around his wrists?*

He struggled to shift Stark off of his back.

“Stark!” He hissed, wiggling from side to side. His attempts to wake the man were only rewarded with a sleepy wordless protest, as Stark shifted off of him.

“*Stark!* You forgot to take these blasted cuffs off of me.” He hissed, turning awkwardly to face the sleeping playboy.

“No.” His mortal muttered querulously, “I’m never letting you go.” Stark then rubbed his face sleepily against the sheet.

“You’re never going back to Viking land.” The mortal sighed as he curled in until the top of his head touched Loki’s chest.

“*Stark*. Take these cuffs off of me.” Loki commanded.

“Nuh huh. You’re going to love me... Have hot sex every night...” The billionaire mumbled and then yawned, now snuggled up against Loki’s side. “Going to stay with me forever...” He sighed, never once opening his eyes.

“Stark! Get these cuffs off of me before I have Jarvis call the guards.” Loki half-snarled, still tired, but starting to get fairly peeved.

“No. No calls,” Stark whined sleepily, “Jarvis no calls to guards, we’re sleeping now.”

“Very good sir.”

“Stark!”

“Shhhhh...” Stark curled an arm around Loki, and snuffled his chest a moment or two before patting him.

“Bambi, sleep now,” He breathed, falling limply against Loki’s body.

OoooO

Loki’s slitted eyes glared at the top of Stark’s head. He was not Tony Stark’s personal body pillow. Nor was he the least bit comfortable with his hands above his head. Or being unable to get anything for the small headache trying to bloom behind his eyes. Not to mention he was lying in a wet spot with a softly snoring Tony Stark sprawled across him. Who was, no doubt, getting ready to drool all over him at any moment now.

Loki had spent several long minutes trying to get the wretched mortal to wake up. The only thing he accomplished was to have the comforter pulled over them both as the playboy snuggled closer to Loki. Then, still without waking up, Stark wrapped his leg around the struggling god.

Loki hissed in aggravation. Just about to drop off to sleep again, he lifted his head, and glared at the cuffs that his stupid partner had forgotten to remove.

It was then he noticed that his *male* hands chained to the headboard.

Oh shit.

The remembrance of the evening’s activities rolled over the god like a cold wave. Well that would certainly explain why he was now so very weary. Groaning, Loki remembered Stark’s initial behavior when he pulled Loki’s seiðr. And then he recalled his own disjointed responses as the sudden relief of not having to control his seiðr had left him positively giddy.

And Stark. Stark would have been drunk with euphoria. More than that even, since Stark had never felt seiðr coursing through his body before. The feeling was overwhelming enough when you were already familiar with it. How much worse would it have been if you had never had access to it?

But still!

Loki screamed for help and tried to kicking Stark awake. Then he started pulling on the cuffs in fury. He knew that his mortal body didn't have the strength to break the bed frame holding him, but Loki was pissed. But all his anger got him was Stark rolling over to the far side of the overly large bed, and dragging the comforter with him.

The wretched man would *NOT* wake up.

Stark couldn't use seiðr. But from his deep fatigue, Loki had no doubt that Stark's mortal body had made some instinctive demands upon it. Demands which had severely over drawn his body's natural energy levels. Hence Stark's coma like slumber.

OoooO

Loki had spent the next two hours talking to Jarvis. He explained how and why they had both been severely impaired the night before. And how they were therefore not fit to give commands that couldn't be overridden. Stark's intoxication was from the over whelming rapture of power for those not used to having it. His more minor impairment, was from the sheer relief of a body that no longer had to control seiðr without the energy levels to do it easily. At first he explained and argued as calmly and rationally as he could. Given his own fatigue and the whole fiasco that had occurred of course. Then he argued less calmly. During the last thirty minutes or so, his explanations were laced with obscenities, and sometimes screamed at the top of his lungs.

Unfortunately, Jarvis wouldn't budge, Stark had said no calls. As their current physical conditions didn't indicated any emergency, nothing would induce Jarvis to override his protocols. No calls meant Loki could not even call Darcy. Who was admittedly hours away handling a family emergency, but she could have at least bypassed Jarvis and informed Pepper.

Not that Loki really wanted anyone to see him like this, freshly penetrated while still in his male form.

The constant blocking that Loki had been doing, had no doubt long ago discouraged any casual scryers. However, Heimdall could have checked in at some point during the evening if only for a moment. And possibly Odin if he was on his throne and making sure that Loki wasn't committing any prohibited acts.

Well if Odin had checked in, there would be no wondering now. Perhaps it had not been the prohibited act Odin had been concerned about. But this evening had been fairly unsavory by Asgardian warrior standards. Stark had better hope that if anyone had checked that it had only been a glimpse. Otherwise, blurry line for Asgard or not, Loki's sustained wrath was something Stark was going to have to worry about.

Oh yes. He was going to kill Tony Stark when he got these handcuffs off.

Screaming as loudly as his abused throat would allow, Loki renewed his attack on the headboard. Even as tears gathered in his eyes, Loki tried to tell himself he wasn't going to cry. He was going to get out of these stupid chains. And he was going to kill Stark. He wasn't going to cry, he reminded himself, as he pulled and jerked on the handcuffs. Not that he was accomplishing anything except ruining the finish on the headboard. And irrationally, bruising and scraping his own wrists. No, he wasn't going to cry. Not even if tears of frustration dripped down his face as he struggled.

OoooO

"Good morning, Sir," Jarvis said. "It is ten a.m., the current temperature is forty-six degrees and the high temperature today will be 58 degrees. Heimdall is due to pick Prince Loki and his party up

in two hours.”

Jarvis’ announcement hadn’t woken Loki, he had never gone back to sleep. But it did add another layer of desperation to his arguments with the AI. Jarvis was by this time, sounding a bit more concerned. Especially when Loki detailed, at the top of his lungs, what would happen to Stark if Heimdall actually had to release him. Loki did after all have a contingent of guards, that were, more or less at his command.

“Stark, I swear by the Nine I’m going to kill you when I get loose,” Loki hissed at the figure now sleeping at the foot of the bed. He was just too far away for Loki to kick.

OoooO

“Jarvis, how much longer do I have?” Loki croaked his voice ruined from a night of screaming.

“Just over an hour, sir. I do apologize about not allowing you any calls out. I do have my orders,” Said the AI regretfully.

Loki just let his head fall back with a sigh as he worked, by feel, the last bead out of his hair. Throwing the ridiculously expensive bauble as far as he could, his hands slumped down. To say that he was not looking forward to the possibility of Heimdall having to come looking for him, was as the mortals said... a bit of an understatement.

“Good morning, Sir. It is eleven-twelve a.m., the current temperature is 49 degrees and the high temperature will be 57 degrees. Heimdall is due to pick Prince Loki and his party up in forty-eight minutes. Also, Ms. Potts is attempting an override on your private elevator.” Jarvis’ voice took on a note of censure. “She has been trying to reach you for over an two hours and is a bit unhappy. You may want to wake up immediately.”

Apparently, Jarvis was able to see something from his angle that Loki couldn’t. “Sir, you really need to wake up now, it is most important.”

Stark stretched with a low groan. One of his arms bumped into Loki’s leg, before he stroked down it. “Oh my god that was incredible last night,” He said, shaking his head and rolling over with a big smile to look up at a glaring Loki.

“Bambi?”

“Were you... Crying?”

Jerking into a sitting position, Stark paled, swaying woozily a moment. “What? Why are you still handcuffed?” He asked, confusion evident on his face, as well as his tone.

“Sir, Ms. Potts is demanding to speak with you.”

“Fuck it Jarvis, tell her to wait a minute.” Stark snapped scrambling up towards the head of the bed. His expression crumpling when he noticed the wrecked expression on Loki’s face. Not to mention the bruises and scrapes from the handcuffs.

“Oh god Bambi, I am so sorry, so sorry. Did you have a panic attack? Why didn’t you wake me?”

“Sir, I’m afraid Ms. Potts is quite insistent.”

“Fine. Fuck it fine!” Shouted the harassed Stark, scrabbling in the night stand drawer to get the handcuff key. “No guards, tell her to wait in the living room,” He snapped.

Hands shaking, Stark unlocked the cuffs. He loosened them gingerly from the bruised and scraped skin before flinging them hard into the corner. Helping Loki to sit up, Stark ran his hands up Loki's shoulder and neck until he cupped the god's face on either side. "Oh, my god, what did I do," he moaned.

The words were barely out of his mouth when two hands pushed hard against his chest. So hard that he was bowled backwards off the edge of the bed.

"I'll tell you what you did, you bacraut!" Loki all but shrieked his voice rough and cracking. His open dress shirt hanging loose, and the forgotten black silk tie laying against his pale front, Loki leapt to his feet. Arm muscles trembled as his fists clenched and shook, the god was practically vibrating with fury.

Standing in the center of the bed, Loki angrily brushed back his disheveled hair. His green eyed glare searing the shocked Stark. "For no reason but your own selfishness you stole my magic, disrupted my concealment spell, and were too stupidly drunk on my stolen powers to understand that you needed to activate your pendant!" Loki roared.

"You possibly allowed Heimdall, and maybe even the All Father himself, to see me being taken in my male form as if I was some common, filthy, ergi, whore! That is what you did!" The god snarled breathing hard.

Stark stammered, scrambling to his feet, horror stricken at his offense. "Oh, geeze, oh god, Loki... Loki... I'm so sorry. I thought... I thought... We've done this stuff befo--."

"In private, you stupid bastard!" Loki shrieked, "When we both wanted to! When I was female!" His voice cracking at the end, he was actually bouncing on the bed in rage. Then launching off the bed, Loki slammed Stark backwards onto the floor, pinning him down with a forearm to his throat. He knew he couldn't let Stark, with his Asgardian and Extremist enhanced strength, get a hold on him. So, Loki flung himself backwards, just before the bastard tried to sit up. Rolling into a one armed handstand, he swept out with a kick that grazed the side of Tony's head.

Stark threw himself sideways. Both of them knew that if Stark had been a fraction of a second slower the kick would have solidly connected. Possibly even breaking his jaw. Of course, if Loki had been a fraction of a second slower himself, Stark's wild grab might well have snagged his foot. Which would have yanked Loki out of his chosen trajectory, putting him at risk of a dislocated hip.

"Loki, I'm sorry, please, please forgive me!" Stark cried. Using a nearby chair, he climbed unsteadily to his feet.

Meanwhile, Loki did a back flip landing several feet away. His landing somewhat shaky, Loki lifted his arms above his head before diving forward into a flip that placed him right beside Stark. Growling, Loki's right palm pushed on the man's chest as his left palm swept up under Stark's knee knocking the man off balance. Unfortunately, due to fatigue and a slight dizziness, Loki was not in his best form. Stark did manage to latch on to his right arm, before he could pull away. His grip caused the god to fall with him. Slamming the side of his face against the mortal's other elbow, Loki's own elbow solidly connected with Stark's gut. That blow, caused the wretched man to let out a huge whoosh of air, and lose his hold on Loki's arm.

Head was pounding from the blow he had just received; Loki still managed to get his feet back under him. He was almost ready to spring into a backward handstand, when Pepper screamed at them from the doorway.

“What in the hell are you two doing?!”

Poised on all four, Loki looked up startled.

OoooO

Tony could tell Pepper was prioritizing. “Don’t either of you move,” she snapped. “Jarvis. Tell Loki’s guards to get ready and let them up here five minutes before it’s time to leave.”

“I’m sorry Ms. Potts, but no calls to the guards are currently permitted.” Jarvis said apologetically.

“Jarvis, you’re killing me.” Tony muttered putting a hand over his face for a moment and then rubbing his eyes tiredly. “Put the damn call through.”

“Very good Sir.”

“You,” Pepper pointed first at almost naked Loki and then the hall door. “Go get cleaned up, I’ll be in to look at your wrists as soon as you get out of the shower.

That sounded like his clue to move, Tony thought as Loki threw him one last sour look, and headed towards the spare bedroom next door.

“Don’t you dare leave this room Tony,” Pepper warned dangerously.

“Pep, either I go in there and use the little boy’s facilities. Or the cleaning crew is going to wonder when I got a large incontinent dog.” Tony said bouncing for a moment, until he remembered that he was naked. A side thought of how stupid he must that look, with his man parts jiggling up and down drifted across Tony mind, but was swiftly banished. As was the bouncing, that wasn’t helping anyhow.

“Fine. Go,” She told him disgustedly. “You have ten minutes to do your business, get a shower and get out here to get dressed. We’ll talk then.”

Puzzled, Pepper looked at the floor a moment. Taking a few steps forward, she reached down to pick up one of Loki’s diamond and emerald ornaments. Holding it in her palm, she considered it thoughtfully, before her narrowed blue eyes found Tony’s. “Ten minutes Mister Stark.”

Tony stumbled into the bathroom, took care of his business and stepped into the shower, laying his forehead on the cool tiles while Jarvis turned on the water.

Having been a playboy for many years, Tony could recall more than his share of really, really bad decisions. But this was surely the worst. All he had originally intended to do was try to convince Loki that his altered male form was just as hot as it had been before the change. He’d never intended to...

This, he told himself bitterly, is what happens when you try to wing it. How had what was supposed to have been some heavy teasing, that admittedly had a fifty-fifty shot of him ending up in the cuffs while Loki stayed male... How had it ended up such a disaster?

Tony’s mind shied away from *‘the disaster’* just as the contents of his stomach emptied out on the shower floor. Sharp pains radiated from his abdomen and chest for several moments as he repeatedly heaved. Stomach spasms continuing until just bile was left.

The last six months had been going so great and now one spur of the moment impulse and he had ruined it. Could this even be fixed? Would Loki even let him try to fix it?

It's not like Tony has never hid in a shower before, the water hiding his sorrow, and washing away his tears. After all, he's Tony Fucking Stark. His life he has been one morally reprehensible decision or drunk assed screw-ups after another. Hell he's famous for them. And no, it's definitely not the first time Tony has cried in a shower. But it's been a long, long time since he slid down the wall and just sat there in despair.

"Tony, you don't have time for this right now." Pepper chided him. She turned off the shower and handed him a fizzing glass of water. Lowering his hands from his face, Tony reached out to take the glass. After a few throat calming, stomach settling sips he handed the glass back, and accepted the towel she held out to him. He knew he looked like a wreck. And he supposed he could look more pathetic, but it would be a stretch, even for him.

"Pep, what are you doing here?" He asked tiredly, letting his head bang back on the tiles, welcoming the tiny distraction that the pain caused.

"Fortunately for you, I called to ask you to pass something on to Loki this morning. Jarvis was so cagy with his refusal to put the call through, or even take a message; I started to suspect something was wrong. When he claimed you weren't *'busy'* but were physically unable to answer me, even if I overrode your order, I knew it."

"Thanks buddy." Tony called out to his AI, half meaning it; half wishing Jarvis hadn't done it. And totally unable to decide which he wished more.

"I did try to be as helpful as I could Sir, without violating your last order."

Pepper sighed, "May I venture a guess that this was more than one of your usual screw-ups?"

OoooO

Wrapping the towel around his waist, Tony followed Pepper forlornly out to the bedroom. Sighing, he shuffled over to the pile of clothes she had sitting out for him.

"Thanks Pep," Tony said dispiritedly. He picked up his clothes, glancing at the velvet lined case on the side table next to the chair. Vacant slots indicated that some of the jewels were still missing.

"I have the bedding in a plastic bag in your closet Tony. If the cleaners can't find the other two drops and the rest of the beads, you'll need to go through it again." Her lips thinned, "The cuffs are also in the bag with the bedding."

Tony cringed inside.

He pulled on his boxers and sweat pants before sitting down heavily in the overstuffed chair. Leaning over Tony rubbed a hand across his face for a moment before flinging it sideways in agitation. "Jesus Pep, what am I going to do now?"

OoooO

"Loki, can I come in please?" Pepper called from the hall. While the god really didn't want to see anyone right now, he didn't have time to be petty about. Not if he was going to hide any of this damage. Curse Odin for exempting his healing powers from being returned with all the rest. The All Father in his wisdom, deciding instead to keep his mortal body dependent upon Asgard and its healers. Leverage, no doubt, against Loki getting into a fight with someone. Never mind, he thought bitterly, when they tried to force a fight upon him. All other areas of his seiðr had been returned, save that one. With of course the caveat that he only had a limited amount of power to work with. Meaning Loki had to carefully ration his use of seiðr if he didn't want to fall

unconscious.

Pepper looked decidedly uneasy, so Loki knew that Stark had told her what had happened. In the end, it made no difference he decided, tiredly holding out his wrists.

“Oh Loki, come sit down, let me look at these,” Pepper said, herding him over to the desk, he used as a dressing table, and making him sit down. Placing the first aid kit down, she hurried to the bathroom and brought out the small vanity stool and a few more clean towels.

“It doesn’t make it better, but he honestly didn’t intend for it to happen this way.” Laying out a clean towel, she gently held his arm, spraying the oozing scrapes on his wrists with Neosporin. “There were lots of things that definitely should ‘never’ have happened. And several things that ‘should’ have happened. And as for the whole male position thing?” Pepper cleared her throat, obviously wishing she did not have to have this conversation. “That was a major blindside, that you guys probably should have talked about a long time ago.”

Loki looked away, focusing on his soft black boots rather than look at her. “He doesn’t listen, I did tell him, but he didn’t listen.” One contributing factor of Stark not listening was he thought he knew everything. The man was an engineering genius, no one, not even Loki disputed that. But he knew next to nothing of seiðr. Otherwise he would have known you didn’t frivolously mess with a sudden influx of power, especially if you couldn’t channel it properly. Thank the Norns Stark hadn’t been angry when he’d done it. Self-control being overwhelmed when Stark was happy and aroused might have had unforeseen complications, but at least it was not as dangerous. Had Stark been angry when he attempted it, he might well have killed Loki before he realized what was happening.

Placing Teflon pads around his scraped wrist, Pepper covered it with gauze and a bit of tape, to hold everything in place.

“So... He didn’t listen to your safe word either then I’m assuming?” She asked, in a non-confrontational tone before starting on his other wrist.

“Safe word?”

“Loki.” She drawled, her tone taking on just a bit of a testy note. “*Safe word?*” She stressed, ducking her head so she was in his line of sight, making him look at her. “You know, a special word you use so you know when the other person really wants you to stop. She trailed off in a mutter, “Not that there is any guarantee it works if someone’s not listening,”

Loki felt his lip curling at the preposterous idea that he was not able to communicate his wishes.

Even as inebriated as he’d been, Loki had clearly told Stark he wanted to change and be veiled before they continued.

“I assure you Pepper; I said many words that should have alerted Stark that I had gender and exposure problem.” Loki hissed, before it occurred to him what Pepper was talking about. After all, it had been many years since he had researched romance novels. And he had all but forgotten what a safe word was. Not that he had ever used any in his stories.

“No Loki, it--”

“I understand Pepper. I remember about safe words now that you’ve reminded me; and no, Stark and I don’t have one.”

While she didn't look thrilled at this lapse on their parts, all she said was, “I may kill him.”

Loki shrugged. During the short window of opportunity he'd had before being restrained, Loki had realized what was happening, and had retained enough sense not to react lethally. So, he was fairly sure Stark's luck would last through Pepper's rage as well.

"Do you want to conceal this from the general public?" She asked, waving a hand at his bandages and the bruise on his face.

"Definitely," He said firmly, looking down at his wrists. "I have some small scarfs that I could wrap around them."

"Fine, get those and I'll go get a ball cap from Tony's room. I know you don't wear them." At Loki's affronted look Pepper shook her head. "It will help hide the bruising on the side of your forehead. And pair of those big stupid sunglasses he wears I think, to cover up your eyes."

Ah. Well non-magical items to make them less noticeable would help. "While you are in there, if you would remind Stark to return my magic, I would appreciate it."

Pepper left to get the hat and glasses and Loki rummaged through a drawer and pulled out some small square scarfs. Stark had given him the colorful bandanas as a joke, to hold his hair away from his face when he exercised.

Loki folded the bandanas, which Pepper tied for him when she returned. The cap and glasses wouldn't quite cover all the bruises. But they did mask them enough that a small glamour, the most he would be able to manage for several hours, would at least cover the damage until his seiðr was resettled.

Not that anything concerning Loki, was hidden from Heimdall if he looked. Or for that matter from the All Father, Loki considered with a sigh. But, there was no sense giving the general public more to talk about than they might already have.

"I'm going to go talk to Tony for a minute, will you be okay?" Pepper asked as she tucked the bandana ends neatly under the knots she had made.

Loki raised a brow.

"Sorry," She said patting his hand. "You know what I meant."

OoooO

Loki rarely slept much the days before he visited. Usually he was too excited to sleep, excited to be leaving Asgard. Glad to escape the place where everyone watched, and judged him every minute of the day. When it was Stark's turn to visit, even though they were staying in Asgard, it was a relief to be with someone who didn't care that he was a failed son of Odin. And yes, Loki was always excited at the prospect of spending the day with someone, who could keep up with him mentally. Or occasionally even get the better of him in an argument. So rather than try to sleep when he knew he wouldn't be able to, Loki used the time to double check his plans. He also approved future scheduling and material purchases Janis prepared for him. That way, he would not have anything to worry about for the first day, or two when he got back.

Besides, the soundest Loki slept anymore was during his visits with Stark. At first he thought it was just because he was tired from the sex marathons they indulged in. But he'd also woke up completely refreshed the visit they'd fallen asleep while talking and drinking elf wine in front of his fireplace.

But right now? Loki was exhausted. He was simply drained. He'd had no sleep prior to his visit.

Grueling mood swings from having his magic pulled. Then exhausting sex with no sleep afterwards, emotional turmoil, and a physical fight. And lastly? The stress of having only a few minutes to decide how to handle Stark before he returned to Asgard.

Loki tried to prop his un-bruised cheek on his hand. But that caused his wrist to throb even more than it already did, disgusted he leaned against the chair back.

“Loki?”

Turning tiredly, he saw Tony standing hesitantly at the door.

“Your guards are heading out to the BiFrost pad in a few minutes. Could I... Could I talk to you for a few second please?”

Marvelous, Loki thought sourly glancing at the small desk clock. However, in the ten minutes before has to head leave there shouldn't be enough time for even them to start a fight. “Of course Stark, come in we have a few things to clear up.”

“Tony, you have five minutes max,” Pepper called peevishly from the living room.

“Ah. It sounds like Pepper's mad at you too.” Loki said quietly, laying his hands in his lap.

“Don't care. The only thing I care about right now is you being mad at me.” Tony said coming in and walking around the room, giving Loki little sidelong glances with bloodshot eyes. Loki almost wanted to sigh. His being mad at Stark was honestly the least of his worries right now.

“Stark, you do realize, impairment argument notwithstanding. By Asgard's laws, a male who is not a convicted criminal with no rights, could make a case for an honor killing, don't you?” From the startled expression that flashed across Stark's face, Loki was willing to bet he had not been aware of this. Not that the less dominate partner in such a relationship was normally afforded those same rights. Or even if he was, Loki's case would still hinge on whether they considered his current form male. If indeed, being Jotun didn't disqualify him completely.

“Now, under Midgard's laws.” Stark turned white at those words, even though Loki's voice stayed as mild as he could keep it. “Despite the fact that we have indulged in that activity while I was female, would I have access to redress?”

“Yes,” Stark replied hoarsely.

“Would it matter that I was a criminal?” Loki asked, lifting a brow in inquiry.

“No.”

They stared at each other a few minutes, Starks carotid artery throbbing visibly as his panic increased. Not that Loki didn't think that Stark had enough lawyers to get him out of anything short of murder. And possibly even that. Also, Loki didn't think that someone who had rained destruction down on their country, despite being under the influence of— Unable to sit still another second, Loki threw himself out of his chair.

Stark jumped back in wide-eyed surprise, biting his lower lip miserably as Loki loomed over him.

At the end of the day, it came down to intent. Stark's intent had not been to hurt Loki in anyway, or to expose him to Asgard's ridicule.

“Since this is also a family matter, even as a criminal, I can also appeal to the head of my house for

justice or suitable wergild.”

Stark’s left eye twitched. “Okay, then. Odin--”

Loki swooped down until their noses almost touched, snarling. “You don’t listen Stark! Who is the head of my house?” He demanded, eyes flashing dangerously.

Alarmed, Stark stepped back, but Loki followed, maintaining his position. “Umm, me? But--”

“Yes. You.” He growled. “Would you, ‘as the head of my house’, deny me enforceable sanctions against a family member whose ignorance has caused me distress and injury?” Loki held up his bandaged wrists. “And possibly public humiliation if anyone saw us? A family member who never listens when it is truly important that they do so?”

Looking very much like a whipped dog, Stark rolled his gaze up to meet Loki’s.

“No.”

Stark looked and sounded so forlorn that Loki, stepping away from him, actually felt a tiny frisson of concern. Stark was often advice proof. Not that Loki didn’t know that to be a failing of his own sometimes. But, like Loki, when Stark finally admitted he was wrong, there was a chance to effect permanent change.

“Stark, pulling someone’s seidr is something that is normally only done by the very powerful. Or the very desperate. The influx of another’s power can overwhelm a person’s control. Especially a person unskilled in the use of seidr in the first place. You were given the ability in case of ‘need’. Had you been angry with me when you pulled it, you might well have become so enraged you killed me.”

“What?!” Stark cried, the last bit of color draining completely from his face. If possible, he became even more wild eyed and lost looking. “That’s crazy! Then why--” Stark sputtered to a stop, looking aghast, unable to even continue. He searched Loki’s face as if looking for clues that this was a sad, sorry joke of some sort.

“No.”

“Oh, yes. Had I turned on you. Or lost my mind, and started attacking innocent people or whatever else it was that the All Father feared. Then the risk of killing me, would have been an unfortunate side-effect of trying to stop me.” Loki tried to push back his headache by rubbing his temples, but jerked his hand away when he pressed upon his forgotten bruise. “It would have been a fate I had brought upon myself.”

“But, if we had started arguing...”

“Unlikely. You were so far gone the other way. But not impossible, perhaps. Had I been not managed to stay coherent enough to avoid attacking you, then we might have had a problem.”

Stark staggered over to a chair, falling into it. He gripped the arms so hard his fingers turned white. “I didn’t know,” He whispered hoarsely, staring up at Loki with pupils so wide his eyes almost appeared black. “I swear, Lo, I didn’t know.”

“One of several things you didn’t know that contributed to this evening. Yes?”

“Sirs, I am sorry to interrupt, but the Bi-Frost is scheduled to open very soon.”

"Give me my magic back Stark."

Loki's flatly worded demand earned him a panicked look.

"I've been trying. But, I'm not even sure how I got it in the first place."

"Just will it back to me Stark. Think about it very hard, and imagine yourself gathering it up, and giving it back to me."

"Oh."

"And I expect an acceptable resolution from my head of house next month?"

While phrased as a question, it was more of a demand. Loki kept his face deliberately calm as he drifted over to the dressing table. He pulled a small leather bag, of obviously Asgardian design out from underneath it. And then began tucking a few items into the bag from one of the drawers.

"Yeah. Of course." Tony replied faintly.

Stark walked over and stood beside him, again giving him sidelong glances. "I know it doesn't make it better, but I just want you to know I am sorry."

Loki looked away, grabbing and pulling on the hideous sport's cap that Pepper had brought him. He was exhausted and there was nothing he wanted more than for this day to be over.

Stark crossed his arms, one hand tugging on the sleeve of his own t-shirt. "Ah... Maybe a little heads up? So I can get my paperwork in order, if Thor decides to come down here and kill me when--"

He broke off as Loki turned and gave him an outraged stare.

"**Stark.** What part of we will be handling what really happened this evening '*in house*' did you not comprehend?" Loki asked incredulous that such a thing needed spelled out. "Since we '*normally*' shield our activities, there is a chance that no one caught any glimpses of Asgard's only Jotun actually engaging in egri activities last evening. A small chance, but a chance none the less. So as far as anyone needs to know, we had a fight this morning. We fought because someone was being '*too stupid*' to live on a matter that is too personal to discuss." Loki stared at him a further moment until Stark wordlessly indicated his agreement. He then pulled on Tony's sunglasses, so his eyes and temples were mostly concealed with the large dark glasses.

"With any luck Heimdall missed what happened entirely, and only saw this morning's aftermath. If pushed, the fight was over you falling asleep before releasing me after some activities of a dubious personal nature." He glared at Stark until he again nodded his understanding. And then chin lifted, Loki strode out of the room.

They were almost to the end of the hall when Loki paused a moment, "My magic Stark. I need it now. It's not wise to waste Heimdall's time." Glancing over towards the devastated mortal, Loki bit back a groan.

Always with Stark it was time and misunderstandings. Either it was the wrong time or they never had enough time. And so things they should have addressed were glossed over. Or pushed back until another time, a better time, a time that never seemed to happen. Minor problems were ignored, until misunderstandings sprouted like weeds in an untended flowerbed, growing so large and numerous they threatened to choke out everything that could have been beautiful.

Turning, Loki lifted his hand toward the short mortal he was bound to, he pretended not to notice the sorrowful sheen in the brown eyes that lifted to meet his. Or how Stark flinched when Loki touched his shoulder.

Not Stark. Tony. Stark was from his past life, Tony should have been in his present.

“If we keep on like this we will destroy each other,” Loki said, trying, to keep his own voice steady. Tony searched Loki’s face, waiting, listening. “We can’t...” Loki stuttered to a halt as tears welled up in devastated brown eyes, on his partner’s ravaged face.

Oh Norns.

“No. Not that,” Loki reassured him thickly, sliding his hand behind Tony’s neck, and pulling him closer. Holding him a moment, leaning against him, until Tony’s arms tentatively wrapped around his waist. After a moment Tony buried his head against Loki’s neck with a strangled sigh.

“Next month... Next month, you come to me with a resolution, redress.” He paused a moment as Tony nodded without moving from where he was. Loki continued, whispering brokenly in his ear, “And because our destruction is certain if we continue on this path, you bring me ideas from that genius brain of yours so we can decide how to go forward. So *we* can decide together...” His voice hitched, as they both tightened their arms, drawing the other closer. “And we can change. While we still have time, we can change.”

Loki lifted his head. The rumble of the Bi-Frost rattled the penthouse windows announcing that it was past time for Loki to leave. Tony’s arms reluctantly gave way, as Loki stepped back.

Lengthening his stride, Loki hastily lifted his sunglasses and used the bandana on his wrist to wipe his own eyes. The god’s footsteps rang across the marble floor.

As Loki stepped through the terrace doors, Tony imagined himself gathering up a bundle that included not only Loki’s magic, but also Tony’s sincere regrets and finally wrapping it with all the longing that he felt every time Loki left him.

And then with every hope in his heart, Tony offered it to his god.

~fini~

If you have availed yourself of the convenience of downloading this story to read off line, I wish you would visit it again and leave a comment or review. Even if it's just 'hey I liked ?whatever?' If you aren't a comment kind of person then a bookmark and Kudo would be wonderful. They all help this story's placement on the search engine.

This has a sequel if you are interested - Stark InterGalactic
- <http://archiveofourown.org/works/12465492/chapters/28369024>

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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*****TRIGGER WARNINGS*****

This chapter contains canon typical violence but since it occurs between a joined couple in a long term relationship I am still adding a *** **Possible domestic violence trigger** *** Depending on your point of reference there is a possibility that it could be seen as or trigger those sensitive on that subject.

Please DO NOT READ if you have issues with any of these items.

*****TRIGGER WARNINGS*****

End Notes

I don't own the Avengers or Thor, they are the property of Marvel and Disney, and are not my intellectual property. No financial gain made from this nor will any be sought, for entertainment purposes only.

[Complete list of RenneMichaels writings, gifts, and art.](#)

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[The Trouble with Tricksters](#) COMPLETE - Loki is kept in Stark Tower, but he is a NOT silent, dignified, lone figure, mostly avoiding the Avengers he is forced to share living quarters with. Instead he is an in your face brat. Who walks a fine line between annoying the shit out of all of them but doing it in a way that isn't blatant enough for anyone to stomp on him without an avenging Thor coming after them. 33,251 Words

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[Palaces of Sand and Gold](#) COMPLETE If Tony and Loki ever broke up, Tony and the SI lawyers wouldn't stand a chance against Odin and his Logmars in a custody struggle. Fortunately it hasn't come to that, but it is a struggle dealing with overzealous grandparents? Domestic One Shots in the Queens Grace Verse that can be read alone. 9563 words.

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[The Littlest Trickster](#) COMPLETE - Tony Stark finds out that neither he nor Loki are any match for a child determined to return to Earth. A series of One Shots as the newest heir of Asgard experiences Life on Midgard. Queens Grace Verse AU, Comes after Palaces of Sand and Gold, but can be read alone. Co-written with Ykmust. 27,800 words

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[Queens Grace](#) COMPLETE WITH SEQUEL - After the New York attack, Odin has taken Loki's magic, made him mortal and imprisoned him. But Asgard is not a safe place for the Trickster under these conditions. Recent events make Odin decide to take away one more thing from his second son, his memory going back for the last four years, making Asgard unsafe for Loki's reduced station. From stories Thor had told, Frigga decides that Tony Stark's tower would make an excellent secure location for amnesiac Loki to be under house arrest. 225,458 words.

[Anthony of Asgard](#) - COMPLETE - After several years of being housed in Stark Tower as a state prisoner of Asgard, Loki is recalled to Realm Eternal. Devastated Tony is now minus a lab partner, wingman and a snark buddy for movie night. Pepper has moved to the west coast and married, SHIELD is doing some crazy shit and with the exception of occasionally seeing Bruce, Tony doesn't have much interaction with his former team mates. He wonders how it is possible to feel so lonely in a city so full of people. However he's an engineer and a genius... he can fix this. All he has to do is convince Queen Frigga and Odin All Father to go along with his plan. - Sequel to Queens Grace.

[How Desperate Are You?](#) COMPLETE WITH SEQUEL – Loki has had a bad year and after leaving Midgard with Thor and challenging Odin isn't making it any better, but no matter how smart you are... Sometimes stubborn happens. It may not seem to be in your best interest, but how desperate are you for a resolution? Any resolution. Loki is returned to Asgard and nothing good happens, but Loki isn't the only one with issues, Odin has plenty of his own, especially in the realm of A+ Parenting. Loki is desperate to escape from Asgard, Odin and his past. 73,000 Words

[Desperate for Change](#) COMPLETE - Returning to Midgard after an absence of almost two years, Loki finds that as desperate for change as he has been, some changes will take time to get used to, especially when they concern his relationship with Tony and Pepper. Sequel to How Desperate Are You? 77,000 Words

[Lets Bark a Deal](#) COMPLETE - A spell goes wrong leaving the Avengers and Loki with a very different outlook to say the least. Tony's need to make a deal with Loki is hampered by the body he finds himself in. One Shot

[Lessons from Asgard – Courtesy of Loki 2 - The Dark World](#) COMPLETE - A primer for anyone who has ever wondered what the heck is going on in the Eternal City.

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